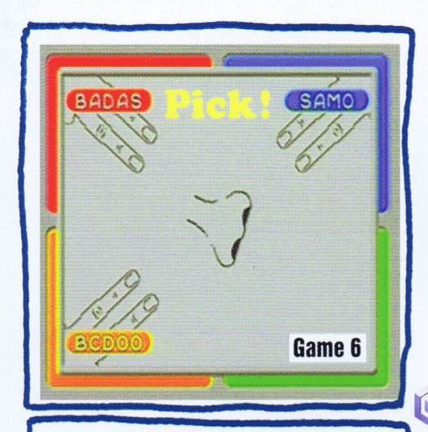


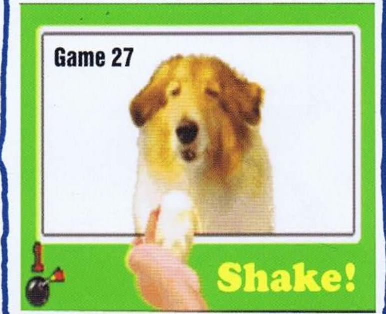
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ISSUE #98
OCT 2004 / £3.99
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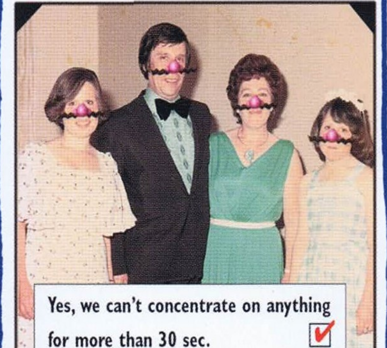


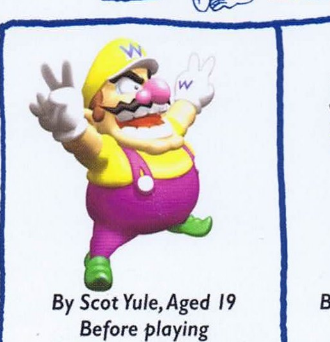




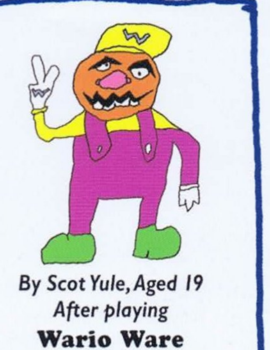


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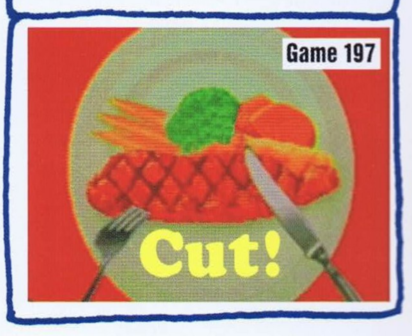


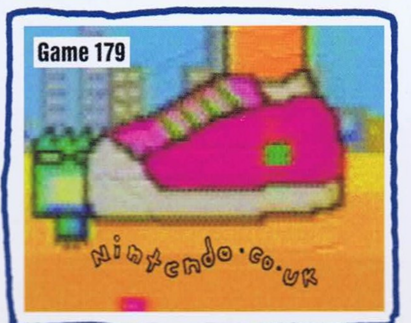


By Scot Yule, Aged 19
Before playing
Wario Ware



By Scot Yule, Aged 19
After playing
Wario Ware









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Media with passion

STICK TOGETHER

Community spirit. A real <*yawn*> barrel of laughs, right? But only Nintendo could make the idea of running errands for a bunch of grumpy old biffers – and being rewarded with musty bits furniture in return – seem like fun. It's almost two years since **NGC** brought you the first review of *Animal Crossing*, so most of you will already know how highly we rate the slave-'em-up. But in perfect time for the UK release, we bring you our decisive verdict once again.

While we'll always bring you reviews of the biggest releases in Japan and US as they happen, we're not rating *Paper Mario 2* this issue. The reason? If you're not perfectly fluent in Japanese, you're only getting half the experience. While we certainly know enough to get by, we still feel we're missing out on the more subtle humour. We haven't shied away from delivering our verdict (so far), but resisted adding a couple of numbers to the end of our in-depth breakdown of the game, starting on page 64.

It's that sense of community thing again. We're looking out for your interests, see. Not because we want an armchair, but because we think you deserve the best service from your first-choice Nintendo magazine. You're the most genuine game fans on the planet, and we want to keep it that way.

Team NGC
NGC@futurenet.co.uk



TURN OVER THE PAGE!
To see how many hot new games we've piped into your copy of ***NGC!***

TURN TO PAGE 68
For a guide to making your *Paper Mario 2* battle set!

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Go to page 112, where for a small amount of cash you can get three free issues and a free joypad. No excuses now!

WHY WE'RE No.1 FOR NINTENDO

NGC's the result of over a decade of gaming genius – so you're the best-informed Nintendo gamer around.



■ First there was the SNES, and Super Play came out alongside it – fanboys rejoiced.

■ A new machine meant a new magazine – but one with the same high standards.

■ Now we've got Gamecube, and you've got **NGC**. That's 12 years of Ninty love right there.

N·GC'S FIVE STAR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UNMISSABLE THIS ISSUE!

1 — PAGE 64

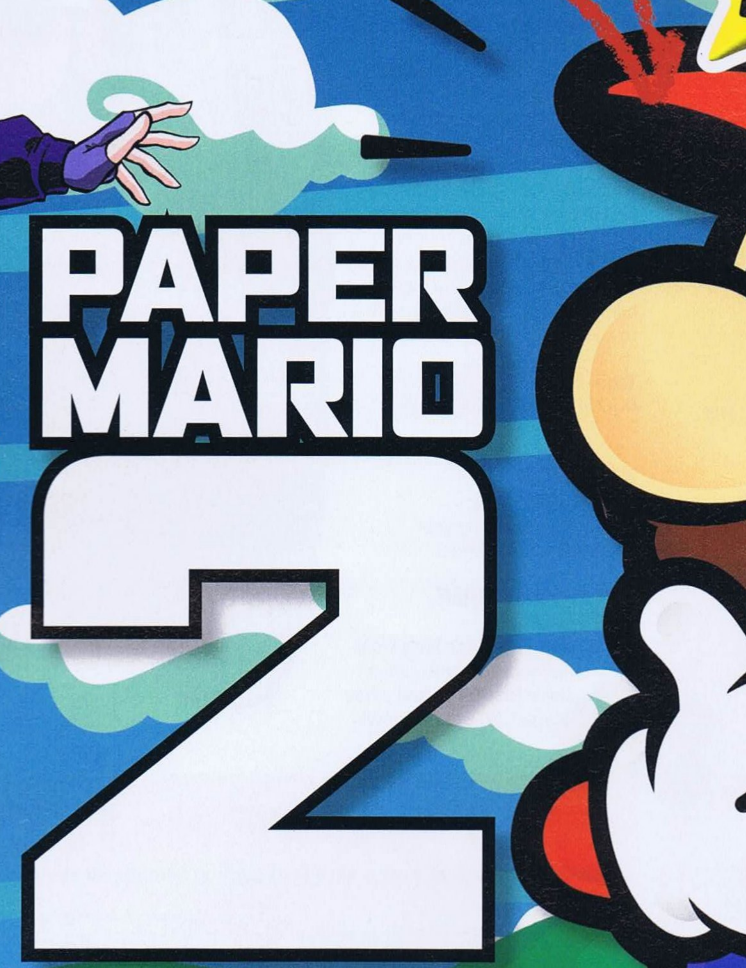
PAPER MARIO 2

FLAT BUT DEEP! Peach is missing yet again – and both Mario *and* Bowser are off to find her…

2 — PAGE 42

ANIMAL CROSSING

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!
We review the European version, and the men behind the town tell us what inspired them.



Mario's two-dimensional RPG won't leave you feeling flat.





MEET ENJiKi

Enjiki wasn't impressed with Animal Crossing. Planting flowers and digging up fossils suited her just fine, but running errands for her neighbours annoyed her. "I might as well be in the office slaving for you lot," she grumbled. And then Marcus helpfully pointed out that she doesn't actually do much here. No tea for him this month, then…





DS NEWS

NEW LOOK! This is how it's gonna be. And look all those games…

4
PAGE 100

JAPANESE GAMES

The good, the bad and the downright bizarre games you'll never see over here.





5
PAGE 48

TALES OF SYMPHONIA

Plucky teenagers, levelling up and a plot that's a pile of tosh. You'll be in RPG heaven.

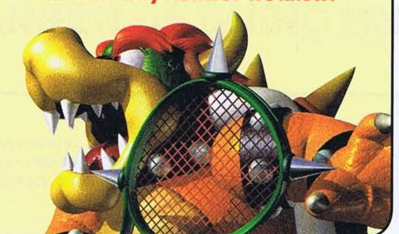
WHAT'S IN NGC?

Enough to keep you busy for weeks…

PREVIEWS

Amazing new games coming your way





NEWS

The latest rumours, truths and goings-on

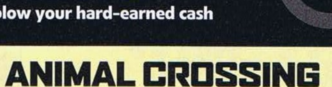


EXTENDED PLAY

Getting more from your favourite games

REVIEWS

Ways to blow your hard-earned cash





OUR PROMISE

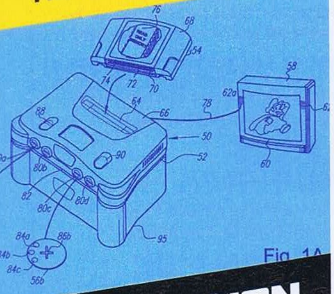
Every month we milk that flea-ridden Info-Goat we call 'Geraint' at the last possible moment before we go to press. That way we can ensure his creamy drops of News-Goo are as fresh as can be. Once drained from his rubbery brain-teats, we ferment it, pound it and shape it into the flat tasteless cheese we know as 'paper'. It's... an acquired taste...

NGC BRINGING YOU NEWS FIRST
NEWSDESK





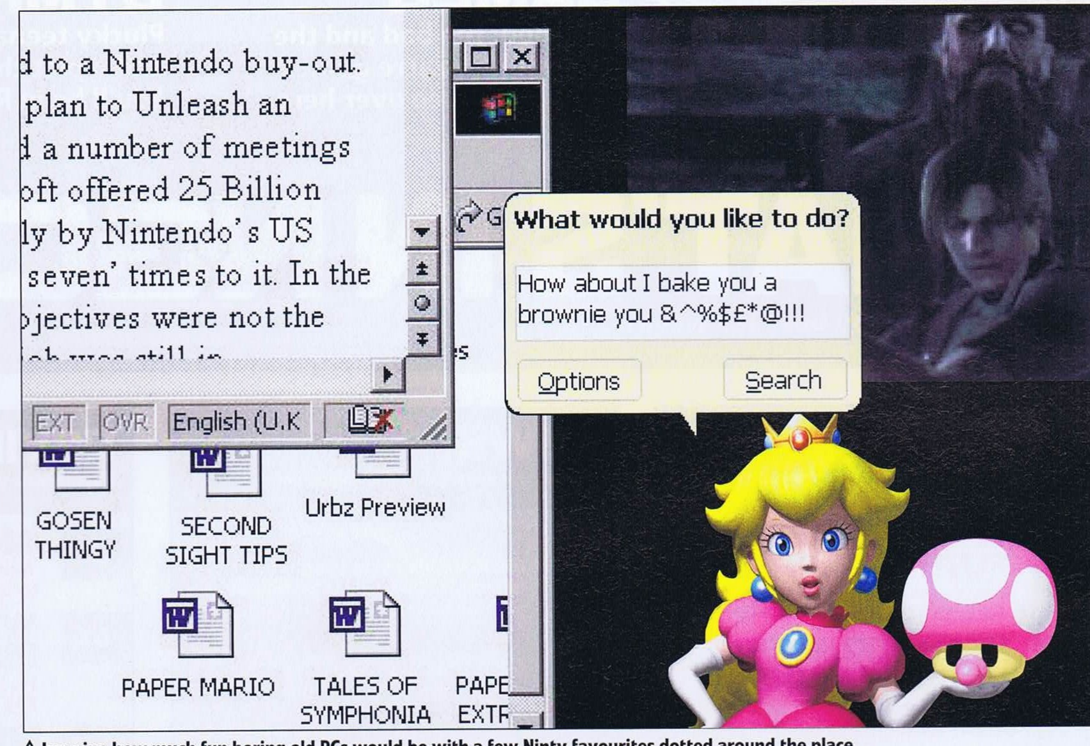
ALL-NEW DS INFO! SEE THE SLINKY NEW-LOOK... P12



REVOLUTION TALES NINTENDO'S PATENTS... P8



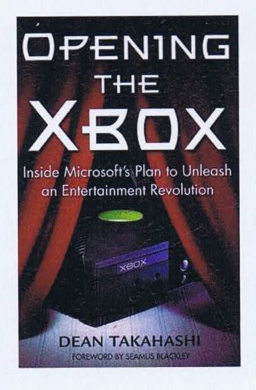
STAR WARS WIN THE TRILOGY DVD BOXSET P9



△ Imagine how much fun boring old PCs would be with a few Ninty favourites dotted around the place...

MICROSOFT TO BUY NINTENDO?

BILL GATES EXPRESSES AN INTEREST IN ACQUIRING THE JAPANESE GAMES GIANT.





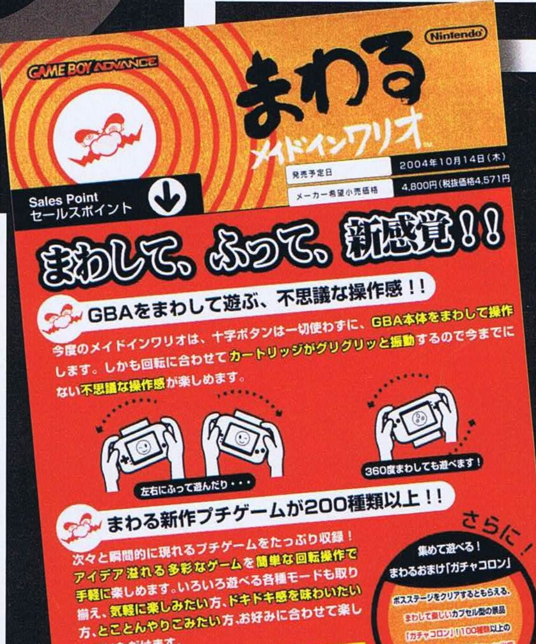
In the midst of another quiet news month came the absurd suggestion that Microsoft was going to buy Nintendo – a rumour that originated when Wirtschafts Woche (a German financial publication) quoted Bill Gates as saying "if Hiroshi Yamauchi calls, he will be directly transferred to me". The article implied that Microsoft's Chairman would be interested in buying Nintendo should the opportunity arise and, before we knew it, every website in the world was discussing the possibility.

Of course, Nintendo are not for sale. The company has belonged to the Yamauchi family for over a hundred years and Hiroshi Yamauchi (Nintendo's former President and majority shareholder in the company) is unlikely to sell his heritage so easily. "We are not for sale" reiterated Nintendo spokesman, Yasuhiro Minigawa "we have no intention of selling our operations and there have been no such talks at all".



RESIDENT EVIL 4 DELAYED

Capcom USA recently announced that their eagerly-anticipated Gamecube exclusive wouldn't be out in the states in time for Christmas – instead, it will be released on the 11th of January, narrowly missing the lucrative



THE KING OF SPIN

Between the GBA original, the Gamecube multiplayer game and the touchy-feely DS version, Nintendo's highly acclaimed *Wario Ware* has more than enough outrageously surreal weirdness to offer. So it'll come as no surprise to you that Mario's evil alter-ego is about to up the ante once again with a new version of his manic minigame avalanche.

The forthcoming GBA sequel is called *Mawaru: Made in Wario.* Mawaru means 'Make around, spin, revolve or rotate' according to our Japanese/English dictionary. Much like the old GBC game *Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble*, it'll have a motion sensing chip inside that can detect how you're moving the actual GBA unit, and this movement will be translated into actions on the GBA itself. The Japanese website for the game shows a few screenshots (which you can see here) demonstrating how this will work to steer a ship or… er… shave off a beard.

It all looks to be jolly good fun – but we do have concerns about how well this will work with the irregularly shaped GBA SP. We'll find out on 14th October, on its Japan release…





△ Had Microsoft bought Nintendo, you'd be playing on a radically different console today.

Indeed, while Microsoft didn't deny that quote in the article was genuine, preferring instead to stick to the company line, "Microsoft does not comment rumours or speculation", it is understood that the quote was taken out of context and misinterpreted. The remark was apparently made in informal surroundings and was meant as an "admiring joke". Still, whatever the circumstances surrounding the quote may have been, business types clearly took it to heart, with Nintendo seeing their share price rise 3.8%. That isn't bad off the back of a rumour.

This isn't the first time that Microsoft have been linked to a Nintendo buy-out. According to Dean Takahashi's book Opening the Xbox: Inside Microsoft's Plan to Unleash an Entertainment Revolution, Microsoft held a number of meetings with Nintendo, the last of which was in January 2000. Microsoft offered 25 billion dollars for the company – an offer that was taken seriously by Nintendo's US President Minoru Arikawa and the two companies met "six or seven" times to discuss it. In the end, though, Arikawa explained that "it became clear that our objectives were not the same". Microsoft wanted Nintendo to drop the Gamecube, which was still in development, and Hiroshi Yamauchi didn't like the idea.

It's worth remembering that unlike Sega (for example) who were on the receiving end of a number of takeover bids after the death of the Dreamcast and eventually merged with Japanese Pachinko manufacturer Sammy, Nintendo are a very cash-rich company. Currently sitting on a near six billion dollar cash pile, they have no financial reason to look for a buyer, they're still very profitable and in no danger of going under. Suffice to say, someone's going to need an awful lot of money to buy Nintendo – if the company ever comes up for sale.

"NINTENDO ARE STILL VERY PROFITABLE AND IN NO DANGER OF GOING UNDER"

SHORT CUTS

DIY ZELDA

Tired of waiting for a new 2D Zelda? How about making your own? That's what the community over at http://www.confusedgames.com have been doing – the results of which look rather special. They've currently got two games in production: *Zelda: Link's Faith*; and *The Quest for Power.* Head on over to their site to have a look and show your support. Alternatively, why not have a look at their tutorials and try putting together your own game…

KURURIN GC

Cast your minds back to the launch of the GBA and you may (or may not) remember a game called *Kuru Kuru Kururin*, a highly underrated and devilishly addictive puzzle game that had you navigating a rotating stick around a series of mazes. Unashamedly cute and brilliant fun to play, Nintendo have finally decided to make a Gamecube version called *Kururin Squash.* It'll be out in Japan this month.

holiday season. The Japanese version is also rumoured to be delayed until early 2005…

SONIC GOING CHEAP
We do like Sonic, really, especially when he's being flogged off at a bargain price. Sonic Mega Collection is to be repriced at a mere £19.99 from the 17th of September onwards. The collection features every major 2D Sonic platformer (bar Sonic CD) as well as Mean Bean Machine, Sonic Spinball, Sonic 3D and the criminally overlooked Ristar. Worth a look.

REVOLUTION RUMOUR ROUND-UP

The console that cleans your house? That sounds plausible…



Some people will believe anything. The most recent rumour surrounding Nintendo's next console, Revolution, is that it'll – get this – have a 15GB hard drive, full online support, a 1.8GHz Power PC processor and a 800MHz graphics chip. Oh yeah, and lest we forget, the rumours also state that Nintendo are already beavering away on getting *Mario, Metroid, Starfox* and *Zelda* all prepped and ready for launch alongside the console. All very specific details – and, of course, all things that people *want* to believe are true. Who wouldn't get excited over those titles, let alone the hardware?

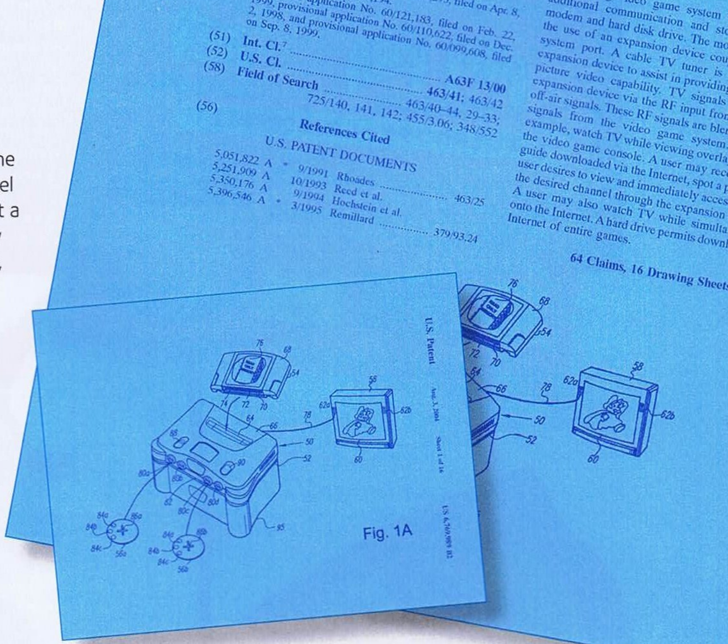
As with all rumours, there's a grain of truth to be found if you dig deep enough. But it's all too easy to jump to conclusions and use these alleged 'truths' to make assumptions about Revolution's features. Take this abstract from a Nintendo patent application for some hard drive and online expansions for an 'existing videogame console' as an example.

"An existing video game system is modified to include additional communication and storage capability via a modem and hard disk drive. The modification may involve the use of an expansion device coupled to a video game system port… A user may, for example, watch TV while viewing overlay information from the video game console. A user may receive a TV channel guide downloaded via the Internet, spot a program which the user desires to view and immediately access, via an IR input, the desired channel through the expansion device TV tuner. A user may also watch TV while simultaneously logging onto the Internet. A hard drive permits downloading from the Internet of entire games."

That patent was originally filed way back in 1999 – Nintendo applied to have it renewed in April 2003 and it was recently approved by the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the 4th of August 2004, so it's not *quite* as recent as people would have you believe – and the fact that on the blueprints they've got an N64 and a 64DD demonstrating the idea's potential use may well be another clue that the 'existing console' is hypothetical.

In the light of this, it's unwise to assume that everything Nintendo patent will be produced. They *have* suggested that they are planning 'new peripherals to extend the life of Gamecube' – but after all they've said about avoiding the online market and differentiating themselves from the competition, it seems unlikely that they're going to jump on PS2 and Xbox's hard-drive-and-broadband bandwagon.

Remember that Nintendo apply for patents all the time. You may not know this, but they have patents for a variety of things, from a dancing robot to an exercise bike controller to a remote controlled robotic vacuum-cleaner. Does this mean that, come E3, Nintendo will unveil a break-dancing, calorie-busting games console that sucks while you pedal? It'll certainly be 'Revolutionary', but plausible? Hardly.



(12) United States Patent
Smith et al.

(10) Patent No.:
(45) Date of Pat

(54) HOME VIDEO GAME SYSTEM WITH HARD DISK DRIVE AND INTERNET ACCESS CAPABILITY

(75) Inventors: Darren Smith, Redmond, WA (US); Scott Elliott, Federal Way, WA (US); David J. McCarten, Bothell, WA (US)

(73) Assignee: Nintendo of America Inc., Redmond, WA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: 10/406,242

(22) Filed: Apr. 4, 2003

(65) Prior Publication Data

US 2003/0190952 A1 Oct. 9, 2003

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 09/288,293, filed on Apr. 8, 1999, now Pat. No. 6,599,194.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/121,183, filed on Feb. 22, 1999, provisional application No. 60/110,622, filed on Dec. 2, 1998, and provisional application No. 60/099,608, filed on Sep. 8, 1999.

(51) Int. Cl.[7] A63F 13/00

(52) U.S. Cl. 463/41; 463/42

(58) Field of Search 463/40–44, 29–33; 725/140, 141, 142; 455/3.06; 348/552

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Primary Examiner—Michael O'Nei
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Nix

(57) ABSTRACT

An existing video game system is
additional communication and stora
modem and hard disk drive. The modi
the use of an expansion device couple
system port. A cable TV tuner is als
expansion device to assist in providing a
picture video capability. TV signals ar
expansion device via the RF input from
off-air signals. These RF signals are blende
signals from the video game system.
example, watch TV while viewing overlay i
the video game console. A user may receiv
guide downloaded via the Internet, spot a pro
user desires to view and immediately access,
the desired channel through the expansion de
A user may also watch TV while simultane
onto the Internet. A hard drive permits downloa
Internet of entire games.

64 Claims, 16 Drawing Sheets

△ **Nintendo have always experimented with new technology and online features.**

DID YOU KNOW?

Despite Nintendo being reluctant to push online gaming, four generations of their home consoles have been capable of going online in some way, making them the most experienced in this field.



'83: FAMICOM



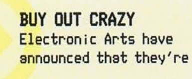
'92: SNES



'97: N64



'01: GC



BUY OUT CRAZY
Electronic Arts have announced that they're buying Burnout developers Criterion and rumour has it they're going to snap up Lara Croft publishers Eidos too. Meanwhile European publishing giants Ubi Soft are rumoured to be buying British publisher Codemasters.

POKéMON FESTA
News from this year's Pokémon Festa (a Pokémon event held around Japan) indicates that the forthcoming Pokémon Emerald,

TOP TEN NINTENDO STAR WARS MOMENTS

1. ROGUE LEADER: BATTLE OF ENDOR (GC)

Just jaw-dropping. Expertly re-creating the Battle of Endor, this is the finest Star Wars moment ever seen in a videogame. Literally hundreds of TIEs swarm over the Rebel fleet, but this intense confrontation is a mere skirmish compared to what comes next - you have to take down *two* Star Destroyers. Just amazing.



2. ROGUE LEADER BATTLE OF HOTH (GC)

Shadows of the Empire's Hoth level paved the way, but *Rogue Leader's* Battle of Hoth fulfilled every bit of faith we had in Factor 5. Stunningly realised snow, hundreds of ground troops, AT-STs and AT-ATs and an X-Wing based air-scrap. To this day it remains faultless, both visually and in terms of gameplay and atmosphere.



3. REBEL STRIKE DEFENDERS OF RALLTIR (GC)

A full-blown siege, Star Wars-style. The sun sets and bathes the sandstorm-whipped Ralltir in a gorgeous golden glow. Meanwhile, you've got to protect a handful of defecting scientists from the massed Imperial ground forces… in a *snowspeeder*. Not easy. But lip-bitingly good.



4. ROGUE LEADER VENGEANCE ON KOTHLIS (GC)

Sun-drenched Kothlis (all deep blue sea and sandy coastlines) plays host to a crashed Star Destroyer. The variety of objectives (dogfight with TIEs, take down AT-ATs, protect ground troops and bomb the downed Imperial ship) mean Kothlis is undeniably dramatic.



5. SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE SKYHOOK BATTLE (N64)

One of the N64's launch titles and a mixed bag to say the least. Nevertheless, forget the bits where you played as waddling prolapse-ridden Dash Rendar and remember the handful of stunning ship-based missions, which culminated in this cracking deep-space assault on a space station.



6. SUPER STAR WARS (SNES)

There's no one bit of *Super Star Wars* on SNES that makes for a defining Star Wars moment, rather, it's the whole thing. A platformer with driving and flying bits thrown in, *Super Star Wars* was nonetheless a revelation: full of atmosphere and astounding music and one of the first film-licensed games to do justice to its cinematic inspiration.



7. REBEL STRIKE FONDOR SHIPYARD ASSAULT (GC)

Rebel Strike may be more hit-and-miss than its illustrious predecessor, but it's still got its fair share of sublime Star Wars action. This mission is a treat: you ferry an explosive-filled Imperial ship while piloting an experimental (and dead fast) TIE Hunter, before skimming over the surface of a huge Super Star Destroyer to deliver the coup de grace.



8. ROGUE LEADER: RAID ON BESPIN (GC)

The first part of the mission is admittedly tough – protecting tibanna gas containers from marauding TIE Interceptors. But when you get to Bespin itself, the effort is worth it; it's a sprawling mid-air cityscape complete with heart-stopping plunges into enormous trenches to destroy power generators. And you can drive a Cloud Car.



9. ROGUE SQUADRON BLOCKADE ON CHANDRILA (N64)

The original *Rogue Squadron*, for all its faults, offered a clutch of pulse-racing moments, but we've got a soft spot for this planetside assault on an Imperial city. Starting off with escorting a supply train and ending with swooping between tower blocks, it's easy to see where *Rogue Leader's* fantastic Bespin level got its inspiration from.



10. STAR WARS EPISODE 1: RACER BEEDO'S WILD RIDE (N64)

A really-quite-good *Wipeout*-style racer based on The Phantom Menace's best bit (some might say, only good bit), this particular track is an icy slice of hyper-speed brilliance. Hugely evocative and cheek-flappingly good.



WIN! THE ORIGINAL FILM TRILOGY

We've got **five DVD box sets** to give away.

You've lived the battles through the games – now you can watch the last Jedi and his friends do it with style any time you like. Lucasfilm are releasing the original Star Wars trilogy – A New Hope, The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi – on DVD on the 20th September and they've given us five copies to give away. For the chance to win one, just answer this question…

Obi-Wan Kenobi took Anakin Skywalker on as his Padawan. But whose Padawan had Obi-Wan been?
a) Count Dooku b) Qui-Gon Jinn
c) Mace Windu

Send your answer to "Use the Pause, Luke!", **NGC**, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

SHORT CUTS



PRIME BUNDLE

If you can't hold on for *Metroid Prime2: Echoes'* November 26th release date or are looking to buy an Import Gamecube over the next couple of months, then you may want to divert your attention towards this little beauty. The Metroid Prime Bundle contains a Platinum Gamecube and controller, a copy of *Metroid Prime* and two free discs that contain a demo of *Metroid Prime 2*, trailers for the game, an exclusive artwork gallery and an interactive history of the Metroid series.



RARE RETURN

With a game called *It's Mr Pants*. Brilliant. In case you don't already know, Mr Pants is a Rare 'character' that first appeared on their website and has since achieved something of a (*very* minor) cult status. The game in question is actually a reworking of *Donkey Kong: Coconut Crackers* – a puzzle game where you have to form coloured rectangles out of smaller, irregular shapes.

WARNING!

Some games will be on sale this month which haven't been reviewed this issue – on account of final code not being supplied to us. So, beware of *T3 Redemption, Ribbit King, Madden 2005* and *NHL 2005*. Reviews next issue…

which was playable at the show, has fully animated Pokémon during the battle sequences. Will we get to see Pika spurting blood and the colour of Squirtle guts?

FALCON CLIMAXES
A new F-Zero game is coming to GBA, and it looks like being one that will right the wrongs of F-Zero: GP Legends. All in all it looks very similar to its predecessor, but the inclusion of a wireless adaptor and a Course Edit mode is enough to get us plenty excited.

ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Nintendo system game in development – updated monthly!

UK RELEASES

The most accurate listing available – although be aware that slippages can occur. All titles Gamecube unless otherwise stated.

SEPTEMBER

17	Madden NFL 2005	EA
17	Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)	Nintendo
17	Terminator 3: The Redemption	Atari
17	Who Wants to be a Millionaire 2 (GBA)	ZOO
24	Animal Crossing	Nintendo
24	NHL 2005	EA
24	Star Wars Trilogy: Apprentice of the Force (GBA)	Ubi Soft
24	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005	EA
24	WWE Day of Reckoning	THQ
TBC	Ribbit King	Atari
TBC	Yu-Gi-Oh! Reshef of Destruction (GBA)	Konami

OCTOBER

1	Pokémon Fire Red (GBA)	Nintendo
1	Pokémon Leaf Green (GBA)	Nintendo
1	Street Jam Basketball (GBA)	ZOO
1	Wade Hixton's Counter Punch (GBA)	ZOO
4	NEW ISSUE OF NGC ON SALE TODAY!	
8	Def Jam: Fight for New York	EA
8	Pikmin 2	Nintendo
15	Donkey Konga MOST WANTED	Nintendo
15	R-Type III (GBA)	ZOO
22	Future Tactics: The Uprising	JoWood
22	Kill.Switch (GBA)	ZOO
22	Ms Pac-Man: Maze Madness (GBA)	ZOO
22	Payback (GBA)	ZOO
22	Racing Gears Advance (GBA)	ZOO
29	Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue (GBA)	Nintendo
29	Premier Manager 2004-05 (GBA)	ZOO
TBC	Barbie: The Princess and the Pauper (GBA)	Vivendi
TBC	Digimon Rumble Arena 2	Atari
TBC	Duel Masters: Sempai Legends (GBA)	Atari
TBC	FIFA 2005	EA
TBC	FIFA 2005 (GBA)	EA
TBC	Finding Nemo: The Continuing Adventures (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Lego Knights' Kingdom (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Metal Slug Advance (GBA)	Ignition
TBC	NBA Live 2005	EA
TBC	Nightmare Before Christmas (GBA)	Buena Vista
TBC	Scaler	Take 2
TBC	Shark Tale	Activision
TBC	Shark Tale (GBA)	Activision
TBC	TY The Tasmanian Tiger 2	EA
TBC	TY The Tasmanian Tiger 2 (GBA)	EA
TBC	X-Men Legends	Activision
TBC	Yu-Gi-Oh! Falsebound Kingdom	Konami

NOVEMBER

5	I-Ninja (GBA)	ZOO
5	Monopoly (GBA)	ZOO
12	The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap (GBA)	Nintendo
12	Pac-Man World (GBA)	ZOO
12	Paper Mario 2	Nintendo
19	Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA)	Nintendo
19	Mega Man X Command Mission	Capcom
19	Tales of Symphonia	Nintendo
26	Dead to Rights (GBA)	ZOO
26	Metroid Prime 2: Echoes MOST WANTED	Nintendo
26	Spyro: A Hero's Tail	Vivendi
26	Super Mario Ball (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Disney's Lilo & Stitch (GBA)	Buena Vista
TBC	GoldenEye: Rogue Agent MOST WANTED	EA
TBC	Hot Wheels Stunt Track Challenge (GBA)	THQ
TBC	The Incredibles	THQ
TBC	The Incredibles (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events	Activision
TBC	Lemony Snicket's A Series of… (GBA)	Activision
TBC	The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age	EA
TBC	The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age (GBA)	EA
TBC	Need for Speed Underground 2	EA
TBC	Need for Speed Underground 2 (GBA)	EA
TBC	Nicktoons Freeze Frame Frenzy (GBA)	THQ
TBC	The Polar Express	THQ
TBC	The Polar Express (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Power Rangers: Dino Thunder (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Prince of Persia 2 (working title)	Ubi Soft
TBC	The URBZ: Sims in the City	EA
TBC	The URBZ: Sims in the City (GBA)	EA
TBC	WWE Survivor Series (GBA)	THQ

DECEMBER

3	Mario Party Advance (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Kingdom Hearts (GBA)	Nintendo

AUTUMN 2004

Call of Duty: Finest Hour MOST WANTED	Activision
Fairly Odd Parents: Shadow Showdown	THQ
Fairly Odd Parents: Shadow Showdown (GBA)	THQ
Grand Theft Auto (working title) (GBA)	Rockstar/Take 2
King Arthur	Konami
Power Rangers: Dino Thunder	THQ

WINTER 2004

Action Man: Robot Atak (GBA)	Atari
All Grown Up (GBA)	THQ
Beyblade GRevolution (GBA)	Atari
Ghost Recon 2	Ubi Soft
Mario Party 6	Nintendo
Medabots Infinity	Natsume
River King (GBA)	Natsume
Tony Hawk's Underground 2	Activision
Tony Hawk's Underground 2 (GBA)	Activision

TBC 2004

Alien Hominid	O~3
Amazing Island (working title)	Sega
Boktai 2: Solar Boy Django (GBA)	Konami
Codename: Kids Next Door (GBA)	Take 2
Custom Robo	Nintendo
Dora the Explorer (GBA)	Take 2
Fantastic Four	Activision
Funkydilla	Zoonami
Game Zero (working title)	Zoonami
Lamborghini FX	Avalon
Legend of Golfer	Nintendo
Nintendo Puzzle Collection	Nintendo
Rave Master (GBA)	Konami
Robocop	Avalon
Room Zoom: Race for Impact	Jaleco
Space Raiders	Taito
SRS: Street Racing Syndicate	Namco
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2	Konami
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2 (GBA)	Konami
Total Club Manager	EA
Tron 2.0: Killer App (GBA)	Buena Vista
Virtua Quest	Sega
World Championship Pool 2004	Jaleco
Yu-Gi-Oh! Destiny Board Traveller (GBA)	Konami
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures	Nintendo

JANUARY 2005

21	Smashing Drive (GBA)	ZOO
TBC	Banjo-Kazooie Pilot (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Shaman King: Master of Spirits (GBA)	Konami

FEBRUARY 2005

TBC	Jimmy Neutron: Attack of the Twonkies	THQ
TBC	Jimmy Neutron: Attack of the Twonkies (GBA)	THQ

MARCH 2005

11	Robots	Vivendi
11	Robots (GBA)	Vivendi
TBC	Resident Evil 4 MOST WANTED	Capcom
TBC	Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams	THQ
TBC	Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams (GBA)	THQ

SPRING 2005

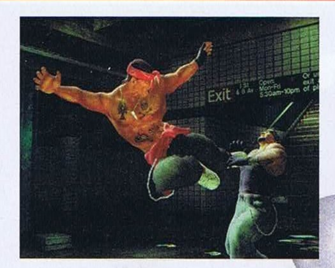
Nintendo DS (Hardware)	Nintendo
Animal Crossing (DS)	Nintendo
Killer 7	Capcom
Mario Kart DS (DS)	Nintendo
Metroid Prime: Hunters (DS)	Nintendo
NEW Super Mario Bros (DS)	Nintendo
NBA Street V3	EA
Nintendogs (DS)	Nintendo
PictoChat (DS)	Nintendo
Super Mario 64x4 (DS)	Nintendo
Viewtiful Joe 2 MOST WANTED	Capcom
WarioWare DS (DS)	Nintendo

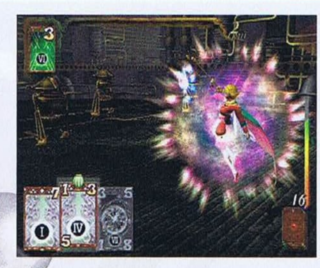
TBC 2005

Advance Wars: Under Fire	Nintendo
Asphalt GT (DS)	Ubi Soft
Baten Kaitos	Namco
Bomberman (DS)	Hudson
Boktai (working title) (DS)	Konami
Caduceus (DS) MOST WANTED	Atlus
Castlevania (working title) (DS)	Konami
DK: King of Swing (GBA)	Nintendo
Donkey Kong Jungle Beat	Nintendo
Dragon Ball Z (DS)	Banpresto
Dragon Booster	Konami
Dragon Booster (DS)	Konami
Dragon Quest Monsters (working title) (DS)	Square Enix
Dynasty Warriors (DS)	Koei
Egg Monster Heroes (DS)	Square Enix
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles (DS)	Square Enix
Fire Emblem	Nintendo
Frogger 2005	Konami
Frogger 2005 (DS)	Konami
Geist	Nintendo
The Godfather	EA
GoldenEye (DS)	EA
The Legend of Zelda MOST WANTED	Nintendo
Madden NFL (DS)	EA
Mario Tennis MOST WANTED	Nintendo
Mario Tennis (GBA)	Nintendo
Mr Driller (DS)	Namco
Mobile Suit Gundam Seed (DS)	Bandai
Monster Rancher (DS)	Tecmo
The Movies	Activision
Need for Speed Underground (DS)	EA
Odama	Nintendo
Pac'n Roll (DS)	Namco
Pac-Pix (DS)	Namco
Project Rub (working title) (DS)	Sega
Rayman (DS)	Ubi Soft
Robots (DS)	Vivendi
Scarface	Vivendi
Secret of Mana (DS)	Square Enix
Snowboard Kids DS (DS)	Atlus
Sonic DS (working title) (DS)	Sega
SpongeBob SquarePants (DS)	THQ
Starcraft: Ghost	Vivendi
Star Fox MOST WANTED	Nintendo
Survival Kids (DS)	Konami
Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf (DS)	EA
TimeSplitters Future Perfect	EA
Mega Man Battle Network (DS)	Capcom
Unity	Lionhead
The URBZ: Sims in the City (DS)	EA
Vandal Hearts (working title) (DS)	Konami
Viewtiful Joe (DS)	Capcom
WINX (working title) (DS)	Konami
World Soccer Winning Eleven Series (working title) (DS)	Konami

US RELEASES

The most important US releases to import…





SEPTEMBER

7	**Pokémon Fire Red & Leaf Green (GBA)**	Nintendo
7	**Mega Man Anniversary Collection (GBA)**	Capcom
7	**Terminator 3: The Redemption**	Atari
20	**Def Jam: Fight for NY**	EA
20	**F-Zero GP Legend (GBA)**	Nintendo
22	**X-Men Legends**	Activision
23	**Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005**	EA
27	**Donkey Konga**	Nintendo

OCTOBER

4	**Mario Pinball (GBA)**	Nintendo
5	**THUG 2**	Activision
11	**Paper Mario 2**	Nintendo
15	**Donkey Kong Country 2 (GBA)**	Nintendo
15	**GoldenEye: Rogue Agent**	EA
15	**Metroid Prime 2: Echoes**	Nintendo
16	**Baten Kaitos: Eternal Wings**	Namco
29	**Star Fox**	Nintendo
TBC	**Nintendo DS (Hardware)**	

NOVEMBER

2	**Call of Duty: Finest Hour**	Activision

DECEMBER

6	**Mario Party 6**	Nintendo
6	**Mario Tennis**	Nintendo

JANUARY 2005

11	**Resident Evil 4**	Capcom

FEBRUARY 2005

2	**Viewtiful Joe 2**	Capcom
28	**Killer 7**	Capcom

MARCH 2005

1	**Geist**	Nintendo

JAP RELEASES

Big name Japanese future hits.





SEPTEMBER

9	**Boboboubo Boubobo: Bakuten Hajike Taisen (GBA)**	Hudson
16	**Pokémon Emerald (GBA)**	Nintendo
22	**Advance Guardian Heroes (GBA)**	Treasure
22	**Pichimo Ninarou (Angel Collection 2) (GBA)**	MTO
24	**Minna no Shogi (Minna no Soft series) (GBA)**	Success
24	**Oshare Princess EX Primo Debut Monogatari + Renai Uranai Daisakusen (GBA)**	Culture Brain
26	**Dan Doh!! (GBA)**	Takara
30	**Fruits Mura no Doubutsu Tachi (GBA)**	TDK Core
30	**Zoids Versus III**	Tomy

OCTOBER

7	**Fire Emblem: Seima no Kouseki (GBA)**	Nintendo
14	**Kururin Squash!**	Nintendo
14	**Mawaru Made in Wario (GBA)**	Nintendo
21	**Boboboubo Boubobo Dassutsu! Hajike Royal**	Hudson
TBC	**Mario Tennis**	Nintendo

AUTUMN 2004

F-Zero Climax (GBA)	Nintendo
Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories (GBA)	Square-Enix

WINTER 2004

BioHazard 4	Capcom
Killer 7	Capcom
Mario Party Advance (GBA)	Nintendo
Nintendo DS (Hardware)	Nintendo
Super Robot Taisen GC	Banpresto

TBC 2004

Bura Bura Donkey (GBA)	Nintendo
Donkey Kong Jungle Beat	Nintendo
The Legend of Zelda	Nintendo

NGC MOST WANTED

These are the top ten games that we're dreaming about right now.



1 ▲ THE LEGEND OF ZELDA NINTENDO

Okay, we just fancied a change this month. *Resi 4's* been gobbing down at the rest from the top of our Most Wanted chart week after week. So (possibly) for one month only Link climbs back on top. It's going to be the best Zelda you've ever played – that's what we keep telling ourselves. We can't see Miyamoto letting the **NGC** team down. No, sir.

IN A NUTSHELL: The most important game in development right now.



2 ▼ RESIDENT EVIL 4 CAPCOM

It's only on Gamecube. It's the best *Resi* yet (fingers crossed). It's… only on Gamecube. Three things to tell all your mates. Loyalty does bring rewards, you see. It's officially slipped to a 2005 release date in the US now (January), but that shouldn't affect its European debut in the Spring. Unless Capcom can't burn enough copies to meet demand. Um.

IN A NUTSHELL: You'll only be able to play it on Gamecube.



3 ▲ METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES NINTENDO

The launch of the *Echoes* demo disc in the US has sparked our interest in Retro Studios' sequel yet again (not that it needs much sparking you understand). Its piqued our appetite. It's aroused our enthusiasm. It's got a certain Welsh-faced News Editor scratching odd symbols into doors and insisting we 'scan them with our visor' before he'll let us pass. Divver.

IN A NUTSHELL: The best *'Troid* yet?



4 ▲ MARIO TENNIS NINTENDO

All on for an October release in Japan, apparently. Bet it doesn't arrive in the UK until Wimbledon kicks off. Crazy play modes, brilliant ball physics, imaginitive court designs and odd player match-ups – we want the lot. You know, we think Camelot can deliver, too. The N64 version scooped 91% back in **NGC**/47, courtesy of Kittsy. Surely it can't go wrong. Can it?

IN A NUTSHELL: Crazy great tennis.



5 ▲ DONKEY KONGA NINTENDO

Don-key Kong-a… do-do-dooo-do… Don-key Kong-a. Once it gets inside your head, it's a nightmare to get out. This bongo-batterer will soon become your 'quiet place' though. Somewhere you'll want to pay a visit to when you find yourself frustrated by another title. Work out your anger on a rubbery drum skin. Then smile at the pretty dots…

IN A NUTSHELL: *Don-key Kong-a… do-do-dooo-do… Don-key Kong-a…*



6 ▼ STAR FOX NINTENDO

It might have slipped down another slot in our Most Wanted chart this month, but that doesn't mean we love it any less. No. It means we love something else a little bit more. But that's love for you. She can be a cruel mistress, can Mistress Love. 'Specially where videogames are concerned. Just ask regular contributor Mark 'Greener' Green. On second thoughts, don't.

IN A NUTSHELL: You like foxes? You like this game! Yes!



7 ▲ GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT EA

Yes, the plot's rank, but the gunishment's looking tastier than Mim's special celebratory Gamecube-shaped cake which she baked in honour of the system's third birthday this month and which we were going to use in a photo shoot for the magazine but she ended up getting the wrong icing and it all started melting and… and… look, you just *so* don't want to know.

IN A NUTSHELL: You're a rogue agent with a golden eye. Mental!



8 (NEW ENTRY!) CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR ACTIVISION

Activision attempt to steal EA's *Medal of Honor* thunder with an impressive (can we say 'gritty' now? Can we? Can we say it?) war game in which you play a variety of characters on different sides, rather than one Yank versus the world. Taking in war-torn Eastern European cities, North African deserts, and vehicle-based levels this promises loads.

IN A NUTSHELL: Grittily realistic. Ah, better now…



9 (NEW ENTRY!) VIEWTIFUL JOE 2 CAPCOM

Geraint loved the first game. It was fresh, different, quirky and entertaining – just how he likes it. And by 'it' we mean 'games', not, y'know… *it.* After spending some time with the sequel recently, he came away shaking like a newborn lamb covered in birth-gunk. Neat!

IN A NUTSHELL: Capcom genius in a bottle.



10 (NEW ENTRY!) CADUCEUS (DS) ATLUS

There just aren't enough portable surgery games these days. But, through the magic of the Nintendo DS touch-screen and its built-in mic, Atlus are set to change alll that. Try and cheer up the patient by talking to them as you scoop out their kidneys? Dr Kitts can't wait.

IN A NUTSHELL: A game with real heart. And a spleen. Bwah-hah-hah.

NINTENDO DS™ WATCH



Everything you ever wanted to know about Nintendo's new handheld. It's all here, compiled in one place by our loving hands and overcooked brains. Enjoy!

STYLUS HOLDER

You can't see this from these shots, but the new, improved DS will contain a slot to hold your screen-rubbing stylus, which is good as we can see them getting lost very easily indeed. Our money's on the stylus slot being located discreetly beneath the shoulder buttons on the lower casing.



D-PAD

Although we haven't got our greasy mitts on the new DS yet, it looks like the D-pad is of a much better quality, raised slightly higher to give a little more 'travel'. Let's hope it's a bit sturdier than the old design because, as Martin has said, it felt a little cheap before. Cheap like Julia Roberts in Pretty Woman.

The power button has moved above the D-pad now, so presumably there'll be less chance of accidentally hitting it here as your thumb will be resting on the D-pad rather than switching between buttons.



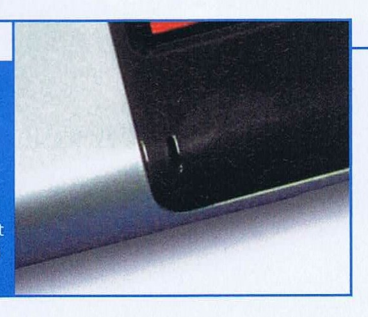
SHOULDER BUTTONS

You can't see the shoulder buttons in the new official shots, but they've been redesigned too. We're hoping that they're more like the original GBA's long shoulder buttons than SP's awkward, spongy blocks. Such a design would make DS more comfortable to hold – holding an SP for extended periods gives us hand-cramp, something that shouldn't be a problem (hopefully) when coupled with DS's wider design.

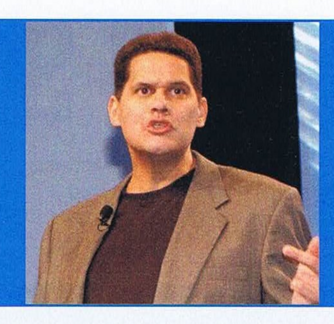


MICROPHONE

You could barely see this before, as it was hidden among the black plastic trim of the older model. But now, locating it for some voice-recognition-based fun is a doddle, tiny as the microphone is. Look, it's just there, at the bottom-left of the lower screen. This is one feature that hasn't featured widely in the games we've seen so far.







NEW LOOK REVEALED!

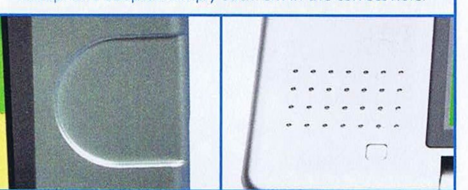
Nintendo unveil sleeker, sharper, attention-grabbing design.

We knew it was going to happen but we had no idea how it'd look. Yup, the big news this month is that Nintendo have finally revealed the final look for the monumentally brilliant DS. And, we think, it's pretty darn good; much more stylish (and you can read our individual reactions on this very page).

Plainly, Nintendo have decided that the old-style DS was a little too cutesy and nondescript – and Martin, on returning from E3, was worried about its 'build quality' – and so have plumped for a rather more adult design, possibly to counter the lifestyle crowd-baiting PSP but also simply to make it a bit more, well, desirable to everyone who isn't under 15. A good move, all told. But let's have a closer look at it, eh?

SPEAKERS

It's in stereo! Just like all the best things in life – music, lovin', er… yes. Anyway. Beforehand there was only the one speaker. Plus, unlike the GBA SP, you won't need a headphone adaptor. Simply stick 'em in the correct hole.





ALL-OVER DESIGN



It's roughly the same size as before but far sleeker and, we have to say, a lot sexier (there's a school of thought that's disappointed in Nintendo making a deliberately 'cool' design, although if it means the machine might appeal to those who had otherwise dismissed it, like fools, as a kids' toy, then that's good news). It's very much like the leap from GBA to SP (and the SP design is echoed in the way the screen hinges are no longer outward-facing). It's also got exactly the same finish as the silver SP, so it's very much a case of having evolved from Ninty's GBA remake. We're also glad that the horrible black bars that surrounded the screens have gone, and like the way that the bottom half of the machine is slightly convex, which should make it easier to enjoy a bit of screen-rubbage. Classy.

WHAT WE SAY



GERAINT
"A vast improvement over the original design, which is the main criticism I've had of the DS. So no complaints – two thumbs up! And a wink. Natch."



MARCUS
"I worry it looks a bit lumpy when it's closed, although I appreciate the two-tone styling now. There's a small piece of me that longs for an analogue stick even though there's a touch screen, because it'd simply be perfect for games like *Mario 64x4*, but I love the stereo sound. Ace!"



PAUL
"Looking good! I especially like the way, if you cover up the top screen, the bottom half looks a little like a Game & Watch. Nintendo doffing their cap to the past, there."



MIM
"I don't like it as much, it doesn't look as smooth any more, and the new style makes it feel more complicated, less immediately 'pick-up-and-play'. But then, I still prefer an original GBA…"



MARTIN
"Miles better. Still not as good as our mock-up from a few months ago, but at least it doesn't look like a boiled sweet now. Still no analogue stick? Bah."

THE OVERALL NGC DS DESIGN VERDICT
"Much nicer before, thanks."



NINTENDO DS WATCH

"Games being sweated over by men who think in numbers"

64 NEW DS TITLES



You read that right. Sixty-four new games have been announced as being in development for DS. Mother! That's a whole lot of games. Yup, it certainly looks like DS is popular with the coding community. And bear in mind that these newly-announced games are from Japanese developers *only* – and that current estimates for worldwide DS development hint at around 120 games being sweated over by men who think in numbers. *At least.* Let's have a look at those Japanese games, anyway – we've included previously-seen titles from Nintendo so the total is a round 72…

ATLUS

- Jinsei game
- Shin Megami Tensei DS



■ SNOWBOARD KIDS

Brilliant, brilliant news! *Snowboard Kids* and its sequel were tremendous N64 cartoon racers that competed with *Mario Kart 64* for our lunch hours. With a number of crazy power-ups, an elegant control system that paved the way for *1080°* and some brilliantly-designed courses (racing over grass, anyone?), we loved 'em.

But how could it work on DS? Perhaps the touch-screen will allow for a subtle control system, letting you 'dig-in' on corners just like on the N64.

- Caduceus



■ CHORO Q DS

Or *Penny Racers* to us, a pseudo-karting game featuring the Micro Machines-style toy cars. A couple of dreary Choro Q games came to the N64 so we're not expecting great things from this.

BANDAI

- Mobile Suit Gundam Seed
- One Piece
- Meteos

BANPRESTO

- Dragon Ball Z

CAPCOM

- Mega Man Battle Network series



■ VIEWTIFUL JOE SERIES

Geraint got all dribbly 'round the mush when he heard about this. But how on earth will Joe's superheroic mad skillz work on DS? That's what we're keen to find out. Surely the stylus and touch screen will be linked to Joe's special abilities – when you hit Slow Down, for example, you might have to move to the second screen to pull some bullet-time moves.

- Gyakuten Saiban series

CHUNSOFT

- Fushigi no Dungeon (Mysterious Dungeon)

D3 PUBLISHER

- Action game

EPOCH COMPANY

- Action game

GAMEARTS

- New RPG

GENKI

- Living High, Killing Low
- Kaido Racing Battle

HUDSON

- Bomberman
- Tengai Makyo series

IDEA FACTORY

- Spectral Force

JAMS WORKS

- New board game

KOEI

- Shin Sangoku Musou
- Rekishi simulation
- Mah jongg

KONAMI

- Yu-Gi-Oh! Nightmare Troubadour



■ GANBARE GOEMON

Goemon returns! But will it be in 2D or in 3D, as in the excellent N64 adventure *Mystical Ninja Starring Goemon*? If it's the latter – and we hope to the great god of games that it is – then surely a *Mario 64x4* analogue control system via the lower screen is in the works. Otherwise, expect all sorts of weird and wonderful adventures in feudal Japan, complete with enormous robots.



■ SURVIVAL KIDS

Surely not? A DS-based sequel to one of our best-loved Game Boy Color games, *Stranded Kids*? We can but hope, as it was from Konami as well. Offering a Castaway-style scenario, *Stranded Kids* was all about surviving on a desert island. And befriending a monkey. Inventory management is surely the most obvious use of the touch-screen.

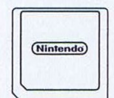
- Vandal Hearts

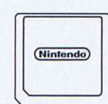
THE GAMES WE'LL NEVER SEE

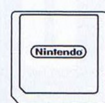
Invariably when a new console launches, there's a bunch of obscure Japanese titles (including a lawyer sim, apparently) that have little or no chance of getting released over here when the device hits these shores. Check out the following titles. Observe. Any ideas on what they might be about? On this little list, we recognise mahjong and that's about all…

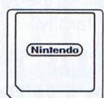
- **Tounou Ni Asekaku game series - Vol. 1 Cool 104 Joker & Setline *(Atlus)***
- **Kisei Gawa Tantei Jiken Bo *(Genki)***
- **Minna no Mahjong *(MTO)***
- **Doubutsu Shima no Chobigurumi 3 *(Rocket Company)***
- **Kenshuui Tendou Dokuta *(Spike)***
- **Rakugaki Tengoku series *(Taito)***
- **Mikke! *(Aki)***

CONFIRMED!

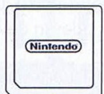


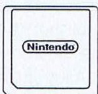












KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN



■ **BOKTAI**

For all its faults (like, you need actual, honest-to-goodness sunlight to play it) *Boktai* is undoubtedly innovative and pleasingly fun, and the news of a DS instalment is simply tip-top. We're mystified as to how the touch-screen will work, though – we guess that the 'Gun De Sol' will be somehow linked to it, as far as sun-snatching solar fun is concerned.

KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT STUDIO

■ Powerful Pro Baseball series

KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO

■ Castlevania



■ **WINNING ELEVEN SERIES**

Otherwise known as *Pro Evolution Soccer*, formerly known as *ISS*, currently known as the best football game ever made. And it's coming to DS as well as Sony's PSP. On PSP it's got wireless link-up multiplayer options, so the DS version simply *has* to have the same function. And the touch-screen? Used for formation changes? First-person throw-ins and penalties? Whaddaya think?

MARVELOUS INTERACTIVE

■ Urusei Yatsura



■ **BOKUJOU MONOGATARI (HARVEST MOON) FOR DS**

Farming might not seem particularly exciting, but as anyone who's played the Gamecube iteration of the game knows, it's engrossing, relaxing and a lot of fun. Surely, *surely*, the touch-screen will be used for brushing animals. Mim said she'd "love" that. She also says, "how about being able to draw a line under crops or grass to cut them?" Quick! Somebody give Mim a DS development gig…

■ Kawa no Nushi Tsuri series
■ Original RPG

MTO

■ Race game

NAMCO

■ New Mister Driller
■ New RPG
■ Pac Pix
■ Pac 'n Roll

SAMMY

■ Jissen Pachislo Hisshopou! Hokutou no Ken (Fist of the North Star)

SUNRISE INTERACTIVE

■ Simulation game

SQUARE ENIX

■ Egg Monster Heroes

■ **NEW FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES GAME**

O-ho! Now this is interesting. Rumours have been abounding (is that a word?) that Square are thinking about bringing Final Fantasy to the DS, with (naturally) people's hopes resting on a touch-screen tinkered version of *FFVII*. But! It seems we're



going to get a continuation of Gamecube's Final Fantasy instalment, and that's just fine with us. Built specifically for four-player dungeoneering, DS's wireless support will allow for some cracking multiplayer roleplaying.

■ New Dragon Quest Monsters game
■ New Seiken Densetsu (Mana) series game
■ New Slime Mori Mori Dragon Quest series game

SEGA

■ Sonic DS
■ Project Rub

TAITO

■ Puzzle Bobble series

TECMO

■ New Monster Farm game
■ Team Ninja game

TOMY

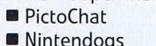
■ Naruto
■ Zoids

YUKE'S

■ Sports (bet it's wrestling…)

NINTENDO

■ Super Mario 64x4
■ Metroid Prime Hunters
■ Made in Wario (Wario Ware) DS
■ Mario Kart DS
■ Doubutsu no Mori (Animal Forest) DS
■ New Super Mario Brothers
■ PictoChat
■ Nintendogs





MORE NEW GAMES



As soon as Nintendo revealed that 32 Japanese companies were developing for the DS, Nintendo of America officially confirmed that third-party game publishers had over 60 new titles in development for the 'Western Hemisphere'.

A lot of the games on the list are simply duplicates of those we've revealed on the previous page. But there are some new additions…

ATARI
- Atari Classics

ELECTRONIC ARTS
- GoldenEye
- Madden NFL
- Need for Speed Underground
- Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf
- The URBZ: Sims in the City

KONAMI DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT
- Dragon Booster (working title)
- Frogger 2005 (working title)
- WINX (working title)

MAJESCO
- Moonlight Fables
- Nanostray
- Plus at least three additional titles in development

ORBITAL MEDIA
- Four titles in development, including the genres of action platformer, strategy role-playing, combat racing and family

SUMMITSOFT CORPORATION
- Air Assault 2
- Organizer Plus

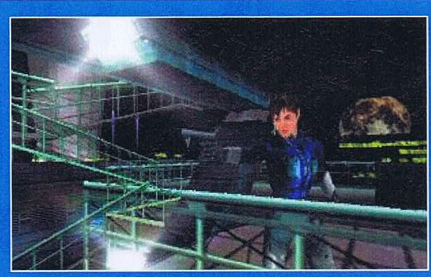
TELEGAMES
- Ultimate Brain Games
- Ultimate Card Games
- Ultimate Pocket Games

THQ
- SpongeBob SquarePants
- Plus five additional titles in development

UBI SOFT ENTERTAINMENT
- Asphalt GT
- Rayman
- Plus additional titles in development, including a major movie license for early 2005 (we're guessing at Star Wars, but it's not confirmed)

VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES
- Robots

DUAL NUGGETS



Cheeky Rare. During a recent interview on their website Rareware.com, a guest asked the GBA team about the possibility of porting their N64 titles to DS. "DS will be Wi-Fi enabled. Imagine… playing *Perfect Dark*… online." The reply was: "Sounds cool, but we're not doing any DS games, are we? Or are we? Or… *are* we?" Microsoft then confirmed that the statement they made at the end of May – "Rare has developed, and is continuing to develop, GBA games. At this time, there are no plans to support the DS" – still stands.

Rumours of a mid-November release date for DS in the US are gathering momentum. Third-party game publishers are said to be optimistic that the system will be available to buy in North America in time for Thanksgiving (25th November). This backs up the Japanese retailer rumours of an 11th November launch for the system in the States.

REG-OICE! REG-OICE!

A giant in the world of videogame marketing is about to bellow! *Run!*

Nintendo of America's enigmatic Vice President of Sales and Marketing (and part-time man-mountain) Reggie Fils-Aime recently addressed an audience at the 8th Annual Ziff Davis Electronic Gaming Summit. The topic? "New Fontiers: Expanding the Gaming Market in 2005". Oof. Naturally, this gave him a chance to give us further insight into the thinking behind DS…

Reggie says connect up
"On the issue of multifunctionality, our intent is to market the DS clearly as a portable game-playing device – just as we have done with Game Boy. But there will be one important distinction this time. And that difference is the socialization factor. The DS will be equipped to wirelessly connect 16 players in close proximity to a single game. This, to us, carries the same excitement of competing side-by-side with your friends in GoldenEye – but expands it fourfold. It's such a good idea, in fact, that even Sony has paid it the sincerest form of flattery."

Reggie says play wirelessly
"The DS will also be equipped to allow long distance connections via wireless internet browser… but as we know, we're still some time away from actually having wireless head-to-head play in any contemporary game sense. So, our answer on multifunctionality is pretty simple – it's designed to expand the sole function of playing games in compelling new ways."

Reggie says adopt early
"On the issue of older gamers, we're aiming squarely at those who clearly put gameplay first… those who are most hungry for a new approach. The earliest adopters for DS will be those who are also the freest thinkers. The trendsetters. The same people, I guess you could say, who were first to snap up their Blackberries and iPods."

Reggie says let's get 'jazzed'
"Developers feel like they've been given a new canvas to paint on. They're jazzed. And if they're saying 'wow' right now… gamers will be doing the same thing soon."

Reggie says Aroooga!
"A recent online poll by Gamefaqs puts buying intent for Nintendo DS at twice that for our new rival… but like the upcoming election, it's still too soon to make any firm predictions. What I can tell you is this – for the next 15 years… just like the last 15… handheld gaming will be known by one name – Nintendo. Because Nintendo has always made handheld players say the same thing – 'wow!'"


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PREVIEWS



△ Biplanes buzz overhead and drop bombs in this Scottish castle level set in 1924. You can still use your gravity watch gadget here, so you're not reduced to using old technology.





△ Set on board a nuclear missile train during the 1960s, this was the first level to be shown during the E3 expo.



△ New fire effects – but don't expect dynamic lighting, not at the kind of speed this game runs at.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Travel through time and meet yourself in the past or future.
- Become your own self's ally and (potentially) your own grandma.
- More than 20 weapons, and a gravity gadget that can lift people and vehicles.
- Drivable vehicles.
- Co-operative two-player mode.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Free Radical

What have they done before?
Second Sight (NGC/97 90%)
Psychic stealth adventure published by Codemasters.

GRAVITY POWERED



Here's the crazy new gravity watch in action. Use it to pick up objects, manipulate switches or even use severed heads to knock down decapitated zombies like some kind of undead bowling alley.



△ As ever, the character design is distinctively cartoonish. Very Free Radical.

TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT

EA bring us a brain-melting, time-twisting sequel from the guys who made (the real) GoldenEye.



Don't you wish you could go back in time and warn your past self of all the impending mistakes you never ought to have made? Like wait a couple of months before buying that N64 – you'll save £100. Or pick up your umbrella before leaving the house today – you're going to need it.

In *TimeSplitters Future Perfect*, zombie-busting hero Cortez has the ideal ally in his fight against the demonic forces – himself. Hopping between time zones like a gun-toting Marty McFly, he gets the chance to cover his own back in an otherwise one-sided battle, give himself a useful key he picked up tomorrow, and maybe compliment himself on how young he's still going to look in ten years' time.

The time-travelling gameplay of the previous instalment is taken to an unexpected new level with the inclusion of multiple Cortezes existing at the same moment. It all points to a far stronger story than the relatively brainless fun of *TimeSplitters 2*, with a much richer Adventure mode playing alongside an incredible array of multiplayer options that will also include a two-player co-op mode.

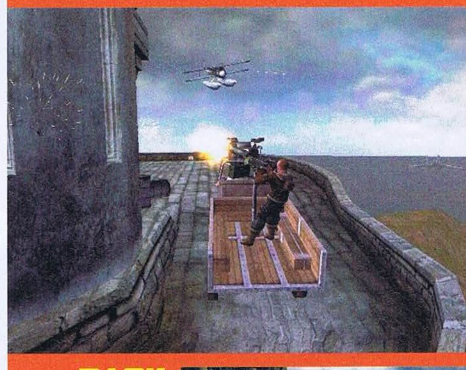
The plot concerns the fight against the evil TimeSplitters, a deadly race previously thought to originate from another dimension. When the TimeSplitters lay waste to the Earth of the distant future, survivors discover that the creatures were actually created by humans at some point in the past. Cortez is sent back, Terminator-style, to snuff them out before they're created and save the future, but the TimeSplitters won't just stand by while their makers are tracked through history and systematically erased.

Jumping from a Cold War-era missile train to a 1920s Scottish castle, a haunted mansion in the 1980s, a laboratory of the near future and the final showdown with the TimeSplitters themselves, Cortez has an epic fight on his hands before the world can be considered safe from the elusive, time-flitting horde. The battles take place on a far bigger scale than ever before, with various non-player ▶

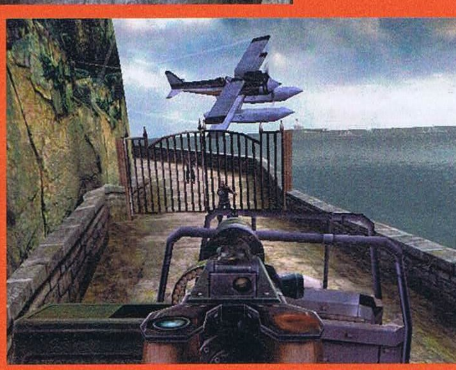
> **"CORTEZ HAS THE IDEAL ALLY IN HIS FIGHT AGAINST THE DEMONIC FORCES – HIMSELF"**

DANGEROUS DRIVING

The law states that every first-person game must include some vehicle-based action. Here's how it works in *Future Perfect*.



FRONT SEAT
Fancy your skills as a getaway driver? Hop in the front of this truck and you can take it for a spin while the computer handles the machine gun in the back.

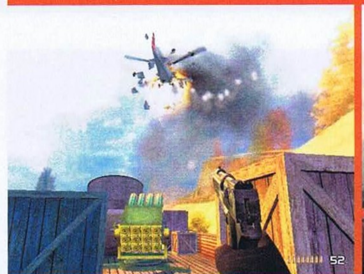


BACK SEAT
Alternatively, let the computer do the driving while you concentrate on killing. No prizes for guessing how this will work in the co-op mode.

"TAXI!"
There's no such thing as a free ride, and you'll have to get out and use your feet eventually. Vehicles are confined to specific areas of the levels.

CHOPPER ATTACK

Where would we be without angry boss-choppers to blast out of the sky? Not in a TimeSplitters game, that's where. But this time you get a bit of past/future Cortez action to liven things up and make your head hurt a bit.



■ Surely you're not going to have much luck destroying that helicopter with a puny little pistol. Better find something with a little more punch.



■ This is more like it. And is that a hint of helpful assistance from the surface-to-air missile launcher over there? That wasn't working in the demo we played.



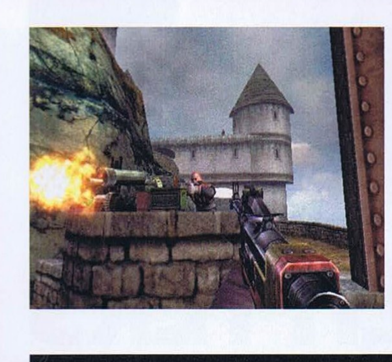
■ Better still, one of those shoulder-mounted things you don't want to spot anyone playing with near Heathrow on your way to catch a flight to New York.



■ Hiding in the train won't do you many favours when the chopper is trying to destroy the crucial item you're after, and the windows don't stop bullets.

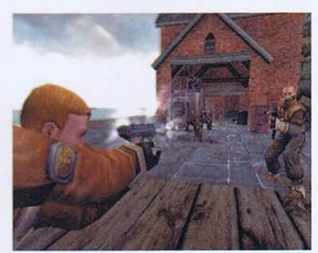


△ This brings back happy memories of planting explosives near the guards in *GoldenEye* and watching them fly through the air with a nice fiery backdrop.









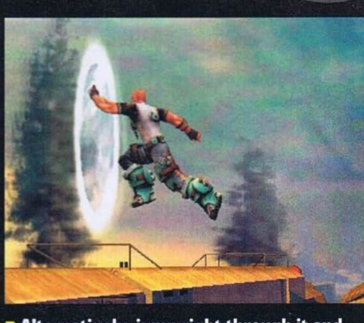
△ Helping out other characters, and having the favour repaid at later points in the levels, will play a major role in the expanded solo adventure.

SEE YOU EARLIER

The fighting has been completed in this 1960s time zone but the TimeSplitters have made their getaway, along with the secret of their origins. Cortez is tracking them, when he opens up a rift in the fabric of time and jumps through to the next era.



■ Cortez spots a mysterious warp thingy floating in the air. Run away, son.



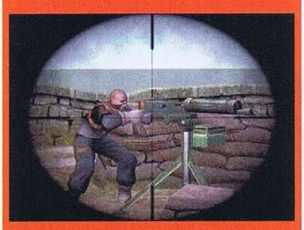
■ Alternatively, jump right through it and see where it goes. Give it up for cut-scenes!

characters getting involved in their own skirmishes along the way.

Apart from blessing us with a proper storyline, the developers at Free Radical have upgraded all of the weapons and gadgets from the previous editions of the game. Once again, weapons are confined to specific time zones, so you won't be able to command the same sort of high-tech firepower in an earlier era as you can in the future. But whatever the time zone, the dual-function weapons do their job in a satisfyingly destructive manner.

There are also some excellent gadgets to play around with. Ghost goggles let Cortez see previously undetected spirits in the haunted mansion level, and thereby save his past self from being attacked by them. In addition, a gravity watch gives Cortez the ability to levitate objects throughout the game, much like in Free Radical's recent *Second Sight*. Except in *Second Sight* it wasn't possible to throw the severed heads of zombies back at their still-undead bodies.

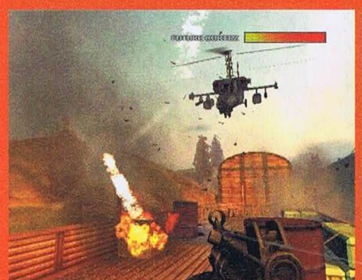
ZOOM IN



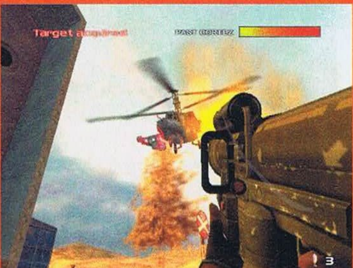
When they made *GoldenEye*, the guys behind *TimeSplitters* virtually invented the sniper scope view we're so used to seeing. Okay, so *MDK* did it a bit earlier, but that wasn't a first-person game and it didn't feature hit zones (limb shots, etc). And here it is again, from the people who pioneered it.

> "ONCE AGAIN, THE WEAPONS YOU CAN USE ARE CONFINED TO SPECIFIC TIME ZONES"

Despite the size and complexity of the highly promising solo/co-op game, the multiplayer mode and arcade challenges will still form the bulk of this latest TimeSplitters title. They're also the parts that Free Radical has yet to implement in any of the preview versions we've played – we haven't seen much more than a single, team-based level based around the familiar



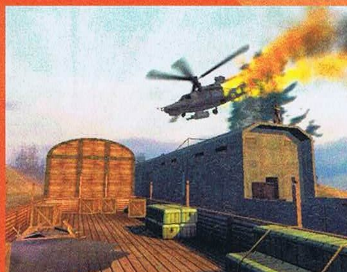
■ Now the Cortez of the future chips in with some assistance while you play the Cortez of the past. What happens if the two occupy the same space?



■ Skip along the timeline a bit, and you get to help out your other self in the section of the battle you just fought. We won't pretend we know the story here.



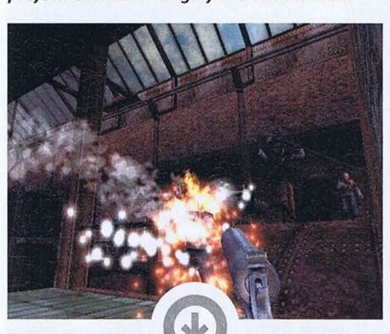
■ Weakened to the point of destruction, your flying foe unleashed the last of his arsenal in a desperate attempt to blast you off the train. No chance, mate.



■ And down he goes. It would be particularly unfortunate if bits of those whirling blades were to break off and decapitate Cortez, but that's life…

FLARE UP

We're guessing this flare gun isn't the type normally used for letting the coastguard know how much you regret going mackerel fishing in that force ten storm. It fires a flaming rocket that ignites everything in a wide radius when it hits. If the target is a long way off, you'll just have to hope the wildly gyrating projectile lands in roughly the correct area.







△ Forty years later, this guy has a slightly thinner version of the same haircut.





△ There's going to be a whole lot more story-telling between major events in the single-player game. Here's hoping it's funny.

Capture The Bag mode from *TS2*. No details have been released regarding the arcade challenges, other than the fact that there will be hundreds of them. And monkeys will be heavily involved.

TimeSplitters Future Perfect is likely to be one of the few games to support the Gamecube's broadband system link option, allowing multiple machines to be hooked up so every player gets his own screen – assuming you can gather enough consoles, TVs and broadband adaptors. Failing that, the game is perfectly good with four players on one machine.

System link might not be something that the average Gamecube player will get to experience, but the enhanced map maker tools should make up for any disappointment. It will be possible to create some remarkably detailed, personalised levels using a fairly simple interface, and populate them with computer-controlled bots. More than 120 different character skins are planned, including some old favourites from the previous two TimeSplitters titles and a wide array of new models. As ever, you'll have to play through every part of every game mode before they'll be unlocked.

It's currently a long way from completion, with a release date set at vague '2005'. Hurry up!

SILKY



The slick frame rate set *TS2* apart from most other first-person games and, despite having far more complicated graphics to deal with, *Future Perfect* will run at the same silky speed. Just goes to prove Satoru Iwata's point that there's plenty of unexploited power left in the current generation of consoles.

NGC VERDICT





TimeSplitters 2 **is one of the best multiplayer games around. This sequel promises more of the same, dressed up with better graphics, beefier weapons, bigger levels and even more monkeys. Throw in the kind of coherent one-player Story mode missing from previous instalments and you've got what could be one of the best games of 2005.**

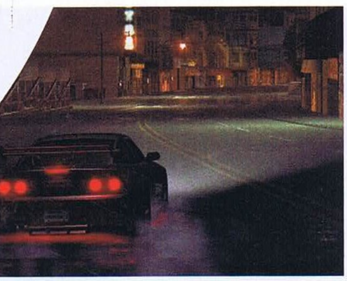
ANTICIPATION RATING

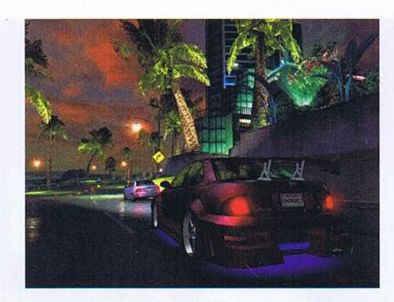






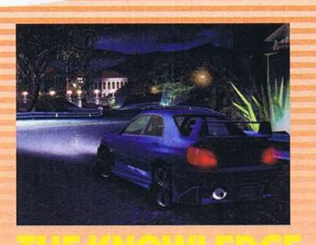




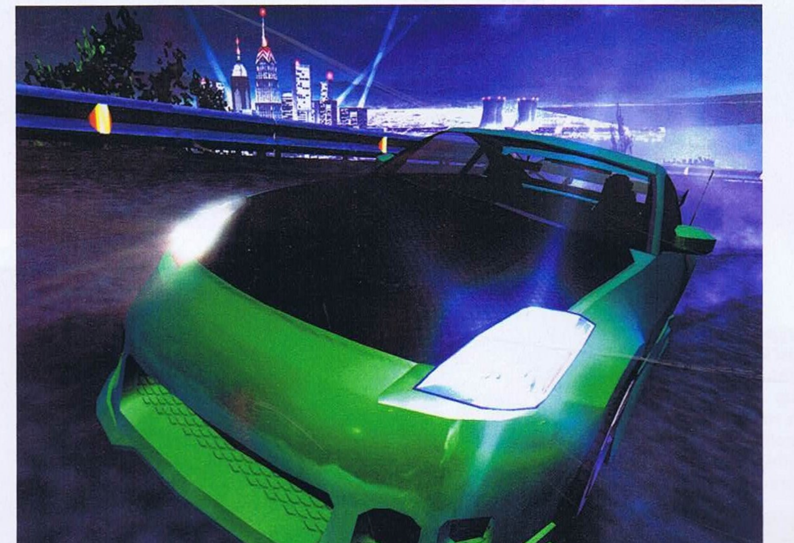


△ Look – the roads are no longer so blindingly reflective. Thanks!



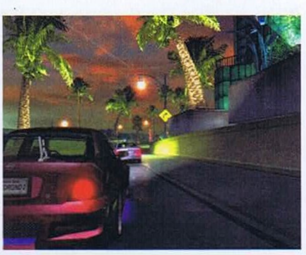
THE KNOWLEDGE

- More than 30 vehicles
- Five neighbourhoods in a free-roaming city environment.
- Variable weather conditions.
- New racing modes.
- Build a unique custom car and boost your reputation in the world of illegal street racing.

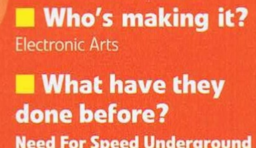




△ Getting a bit sideways in a drift-style race is a satisfying feeling.



△ Sadly there are no pedestrians to get in the way at midnight.



FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Electronic Arts

What have they done before?
Need For Speed Underground (NGC/88 77%)
Hugely successful street racing sim with jerky graphics



NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

The car's the star in this custom-crazy road-racer.



Peeved at the current lack of a *Burnout 3* conversion for our console of choice? Cheer up. Here's something that might help you forget all about it, and is likely to sell twice as many copies.

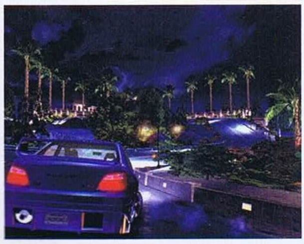
As Electronic Arts wheel out advanced preview versions of their traditional big-hitting Christmas line-up, *Need For Speed Underground 2* looks increasingly like the kind of driving game we wanted its predecessor to be – big, fast and deep.

Considerably larger than last year's version, *NFSU2* offers a unique free-roaming environment comprising five separate neighbourhoods, connected by freeways and tunnels. The streets are yours to explore, and you'll pick up racing challenges as you drive from place to place.

> **"LEAVE THE CONFINES OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS AND HEAD ONTO THE OPEN ROAD"**

As well as all the circuit, drift and drag challenges from last year, three new race modes have been added – Street X and Out Run being the two we've seen. Street X is simply multiple laps around very short courses. Out Run is more interesting, since it doesn't actually specify the route you're supposed to take through the boulevards and side streets.

Instead you play follow-the-leader, attempting to stay as close as possible to the car in front. Any cars that fall too far behind are immediately withdrawn from the race, so the aim is to get into the lead and lose your pursuers. You're free to choose any route you like, and pulling last-second handbrake turns into alleys is a good tactic for fooling other drivers. Conversely, sticking too close to the leader will make it harder to react if he makes an unexpected manoeuvre.



△ Storm clouds a-brewin' ahead.

TUNE UP

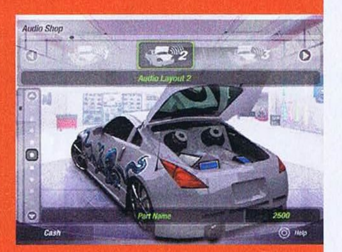
This game is all about turning your plain old motor into a block-rocking beast. Time for a visit to the custom shop.



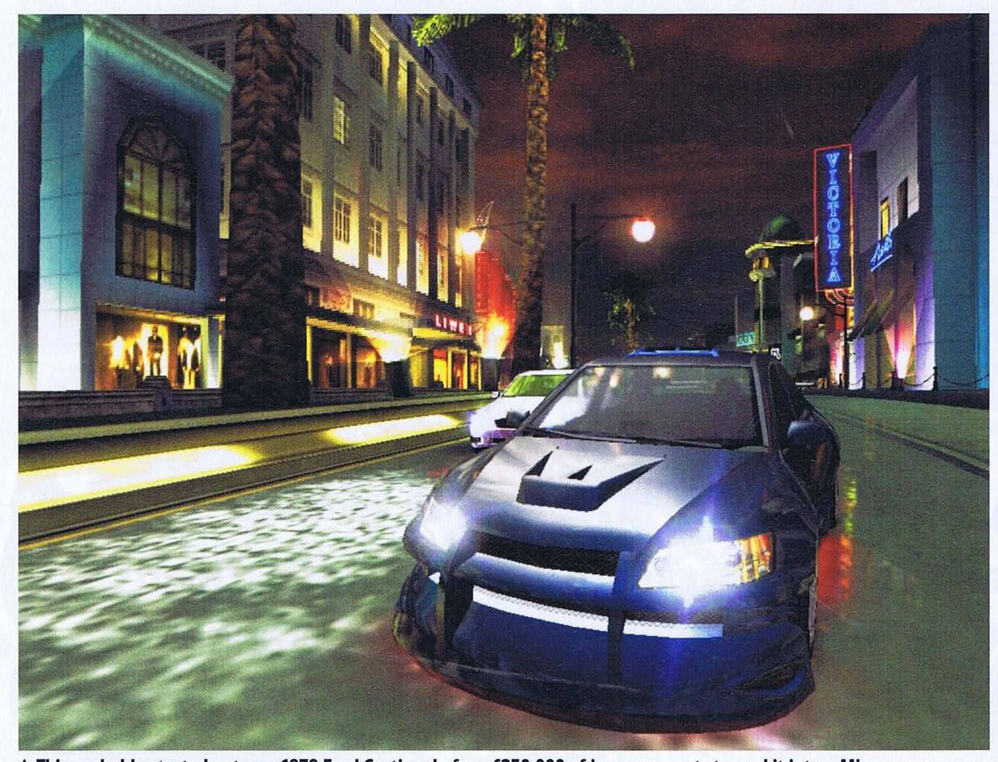
■ New engine parts will boost your speed, but those rubber-band tyres don't look very sensible. Bad for the old chalfonts.



■ If scissor doors don't make your car a big hit with the ladies, you've probably got a face like a mouldy spud. And breath to match.



■ Why not add the audio system of your dreams and your neighbours' nightmares? Perfect for blasting out a bit of late-night Phil Collins.



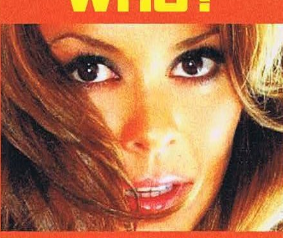
△ This probably started out as a 1979 Ford Cortina, before £250,000 of improvements turned it into a Micra.

With all-new, more authentic handling replacing the arcadey feel of the previous version, it's a much harder game to master. Careful braking is needed when cornering, otherwise you'll find the car slides helplessly into the crash barriers. We found it far more difficult to hold onto the lead in the tight, gaudy city circuits, but luckily for those of us not so adept at hairpin bends it's possible to leave the confines of the urban environments and head out onto the open road for some freeway fun. You can actually complete the game by sticking to your favourite style of racing and avoiding the ones you're no good at.

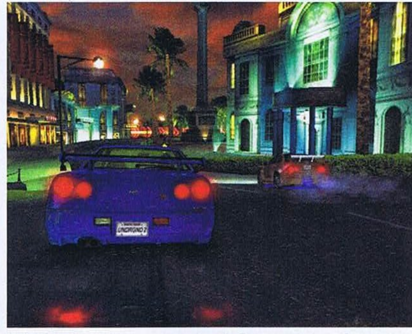
There are more than 30 vehicles available to buy, all licensed from real manufacturers. Sadly there doesn't appear to be the option to turn up to a race in your mum's clapped-out Fiesta, but the ridiculous amount of customisation available in the game's performance shop means you can create something unique from any of the cars on offer. Many of the bolt-on goodies such as wheels, nitro kits, neon lights and thumping stereos are also licensed versions of the things you could buy in real life if you had a fairly obscene wad of cash. The developers claim there are literally billions of combinations, so the chances of your motor looking anything like anybody else's must be slim.

The bits and pieces you add to your car can affect the way it handles on the streets, so you're likely to be returning to the performance shop on a regular basis. Defeated rivals will generously give you tips about where to buy the lastest gear and whether it's any good. Tuning fans will certainly get more out of it than the average player when the game's released in November.

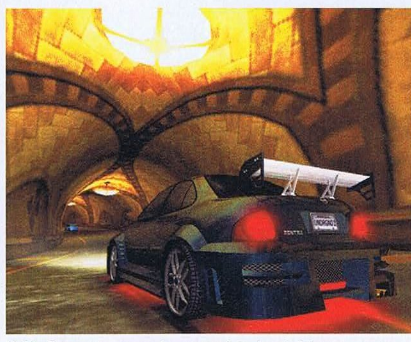
BROOKE WHO?



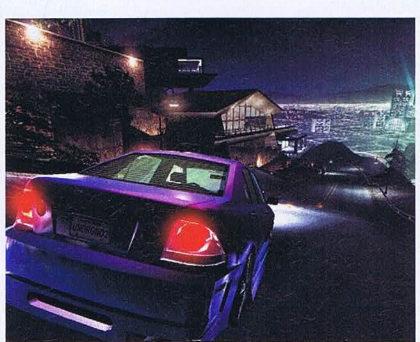
Brooke Burke is the US cable TV host, custom car enthusiast and topless model who was voted the tenth hottest babe in America by FHM magazine. And why are we mentioning her here? In keeping with EA's policy of signing up famous names, she plays Rachel, the organiser of the game's street races. So you'll be seeing a lot of her, though probably wearing more clothes than normal.



△ This place is way too posh for street racing.



△ Red neons – you have got to be joking.



△ Heading citywards in search of trouble.

NGC VERDICT





Looks like a big improvement on last year's game. The roads don't look quite so much like polished marble now, and the neon lighting has been toned down to make it a bit easier to see upcoming corners. It still doesn't move as smoothly as *Burnout 2*, but with any luck that will be sorted out soon enough. We'll let you know…

ANTICIPATION RATING





AG! AG AG!

Forget lovey-dovey tosh like ET and Battlestar Galactica. What we've wanted from aliens, from HG Wells to the present, is a filthy great fight. Which, preferably, they lose horribly. In *Alien Hominid*, we're the alien, so we'd better root for the yellow dude. But still... can't beat inter-species warfare!

△ Just one of the places you'll have to fight your way out of.



△ For a little guy, the hominid can sure make a lot of mess.



△ Who would have thought bears would burn so easily?



△ One of the large number of nationalities trying to kill you.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- 16 levels packed with hand-animated 2D graphics.
- 200+ single screen co-op multiplayer 'PDA' levels for you and up to three mates.
- Includes a level editor to create your own multiplayer stages.
- Team up with a fellow alien hominid and bite the heads off the Men in Black.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
The Behemoth

What have they done before?
Nothing!
Alien Hominid is The Behemoth's first game, and the original rudimentary version is at www.newgrounds.com

ALIEN HOMINID

Is there life on Mars? Just ask the unfortunate agents of the Federal Bureau of Decapitation.



Fans of internet 'Flash' animations may feel a tiny bit of déjà vu here. Among all those inbox-clogging cartoons of Mario having assorted mishaps with flag poles and the like, the original *Alien Hominid* game stood out like a sore thumb because it was actually pretty good fun.

Six million people downloaded it for free, and rather than continue to make absolutely no cash from their creation, the developers decided to upgrade it and release it for Gamecube.

For those who never stumbled across *Alien Hominid* in its previous incarnation, it's a side-scrolling, platform-hopping blaster in the mould of Konami's classic *Contra* series. The difficulty level, at least in the web-based version, is fixed somewhere to the right of 'hardcore', but everything is being completely redone for this console debut.

The graphics have been hand-drawn from scratch, 16 single-player levels have been designed specifically for Gamecube, and there are new weapons and a two-player co-op mode.

The aim is to fight your way across the world, shooting your way through the massed ranks of the FBI and KGB's finest cannon-fodder on your quest to be reunited with your alien brothers.

Blasting from a distance is the safest tactic in this incredibly busy game, although the funniest animations are unleashed when you get up close and personal with your FBI playmates. Bodies are sliced and heads removed (and sometimes swallowed) complete with cartoon splashes of blood. Fans of South Park humour and Ren & Stimpy visuals will love it.

There's no news on a UK release date, but we'll have our hands on the US import pretty soon, and will test if for Freeloader compatibility.

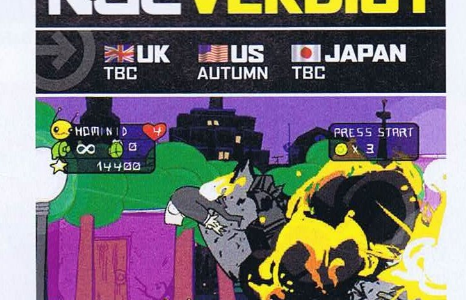
> **"BODIES ARE SLICED, HEADS ARE REMOVED AND SOMETIMES SWALLOWED"**



△ The feds will do anything they can to stop you reaching your spaceship.

NGC VERDICT

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	AUTUMN	TBC

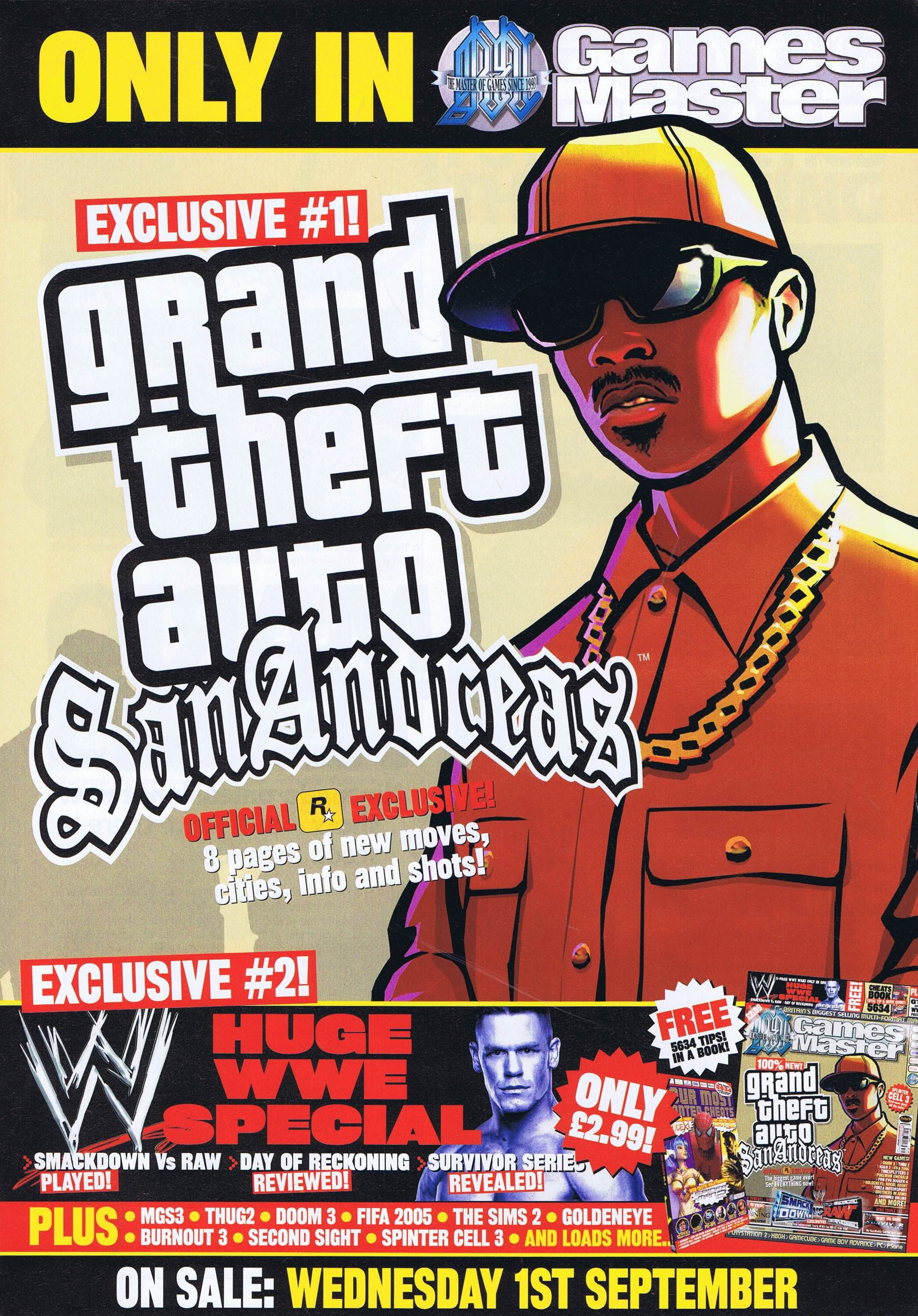


Looking at these shots, you might expect something that moves a bit like *Viewtiful Joe*. But it's actually a different sort of beast, since the graphics are sprite-style frame-by-frame animations rather than 3D polygons. It won't have the same sort of fluidity, but there's a lot of character packed into this hominid. He's better than Crash, anyway.

ANTICIPATION RATING







ONLY IN
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SMACKDOWN Vs RAW PLAYED!
DAY OF RECKONING REVIEWED!
SURVIVOR SERIES REVEALED!
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△ You won't have much time to take in the detailed environments in the heat of a match.



△ The multiplayer's where you'll spend most of your time, but the solo tennis fan seems to be catered for even better than before...

MARIO TENNIS

Nintendo unleash hot new shots – and we're there to scoop them up...

If there's one game with the power to unite the whole team in one exciteable, shouting, punchy huddle during a lunch break, it's the Camelot-developed *Mario Tennis*. Of all the sports, tennis is probably the best suited to a videogame, and as Nintendo are still the leaders in creating fun, fullfilling videogames, *Mario Tennis* is a match made in heaven.

We rated the N64 version as 91% good, thanks to its brilliant blend of laugh-a-second four-player action, superb controls and, of course, the fantastic characters. In fact, the only major grumble was that it packed just one fairly weak bonus game.

Well, it looks like Camelot are addressing that with its sequel. From what we've seen so far, *Mario Tennis* – GC – is enriched with bonus modes and brilliant matches. Just look at these new shots freshly laid by Nintendo of Europe. Another glimpse of Mario's beach-based court, surrounded by Piranha Plants. That's no regular tennis match. Neither is the Donkey Kong-inspired jungle setting, complete with crockos swarming all over the place. Are they a special attack unleashed by a rival? Or are they trying to eat the ball?

So many questions – and they'll all be answered this winter, thanks to Camelot's usually impressive development turnaround. We were expecting it next year, but the game will arrive in Japan in October, and we'll be first queueing up for a copy. Put it this way – they'll have had to have made some terrible errors for us not to fall in love with it all over again...

△ Who needs a licensed tennis game, full of the real mugs of genuine tennis pros when you can batter a ball into the face of a giant flower?

FUTURE TACTICS THE UPRISING

Tactics – they're the future, man. Forget about the music though…


hat's the most annoying sound in the world on deadline day? Geraint playing *Future Tactics*, that's what. Honestly, you won't believe the music in this game. Or the odd English accents. Sheesh.

It's a – wait for it – turn-based strategy game where you manoeuvre your units around a battlefield (a futuristic one, natch – hence the title) picking off alien invaders. With us so far?

To look at though, it's not the sauciest game in the world. The textures are basic and the animation's uninspiring and it's all a bit bland.

From what we've played so far (or at least from what Geraint's played so far – most of us can't stick this sort of nonsense), there's some original touches in there – including the way you target enemies for power and accuracy and the destructible scenery which you can manipulate to your advantage.

It's out in October. Review next issue…











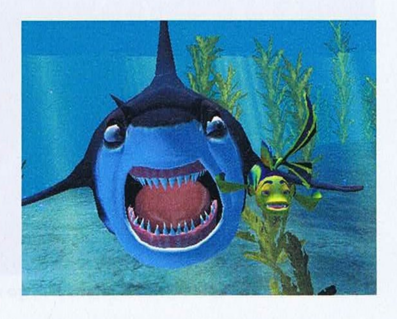
SHARK TALE


new animated film? That must mean it's time for a cute little film tie-in. Or rather two, given that it's coming out on both GBA and Gamecube. Lucky old us, eh?

Both are platformers that'll give you the chance to explore the Reef city, the setting for the aquatic gangster film, as you work your way up from little tiddler to big fish. In the Gamecube version, elements such as 'dancing' in time to songs from the soundtrack and washing whales are all part of the action, whereas in the GBA title they're minigames. Now we don't know about you, but between this and the forthcoming *Incredibles*, we can hardly contain our excitement.

Both *Shark Tales* are out this October.









△ There's no *Medal of Honor* game this year, so this has got the war gig all to itself…



△ Look at the detail – gritty and grisly, just how we like it.





△ Loads of vehicle missions'll help jazz it up.

CALL OF DUTY FINEST HOUR

The grittiest, dirtiest war game we've seen since Army Men.



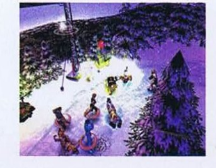
Kittsy wouldn't stop going on about this since he came back from E3. Apparently it's 'really good' and some bloke gets 'executed' when he's swimming away from the battlefield. Where *Call of Duty* really excels, though, is in the way that it really makes you feel as though you're participating in a battle. Think the opening stages of EA's *Medal of Honor* series, only with more relentless consistency and power and you'll be along the right lines.

However, unlike the *MoH* series, *Call of Duty* puts you in control of a number of different characters from the various sides, giving a wider scope in terms of possible conflicts. You'll get the chance to play as a Russian recruit, a sniper, a British chap, a tank driver and an American, among others, and will take part in missions in Stalingrad, North Africa and European cities. What's more, the missions revolve around each character's special skill, so you *will* have to drive tanks, snipe and so on – the jobs aren't there merely for atmosphere.

In the tank driving sections that we played, there were free-roaming driving sections, complete with claustrophobic letter-box-style view, as well as more restrictive bits where the emphasis was on blowing the hell out of stuff with the mounted cannon and machineguns. In total, the driving sections, including stints in charge of Jeeps and motorbikes, make up about a quarter of the game, with standard FPS missions making up the remainder.

We'll have more on the game before its November release.

X-MEN LEGENDS





Wolverine, levelling up? It's no joke.



△ Slash him in the spine! Trim his hair! Aw, go on…



The X-men comics are cool, and the recent blockbusting films have been great. Unfortunately the games aren't usually anything to shout about.

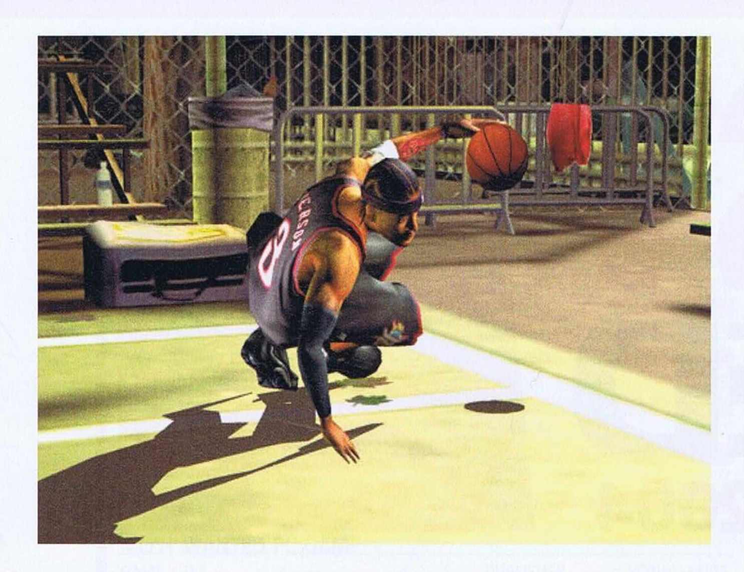
The story behind this game is that Magneto has devised a way to make mutants the most powerful beings on the planet – as if they haven't already got a *slight* advantage over regular humans thanks to laser eyes, metallic endoskeletons and the ability to make you bleed through the brain using the power of think! Nevertheless, your team must set off to battle Magneto's merry men and stop them taking over the world. Nice.

Unusually (for a superhero game, anyway) *Legends* takes the form of an RPG. You can choose your own team of X-Men (from existing characters in the series; you don't make your own) and are able to 'enhance their powers' through regular use in the battlefield – in other words, do a bit of levelling up. In standard RPG fashion, you take control of one member of your team, and once you get into battle you can switch between all the members of your party to allow you to make the best of the situations that present themselves.

Developers Raven have a strong history of developing enormous, expansive games. Which is all very well and good – but they also have a reputation in this office as churning out the over-hyped and over-rated snore-fest *Jedi Knight II*.

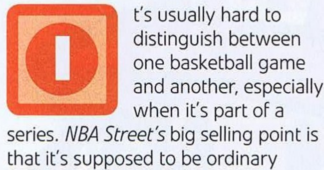
So expect something mammoth to land on Gamecube this October – whether it'll be any good or not, we can't say for now.





NBA STREET V3

Basketball has never been so good ... apparently.

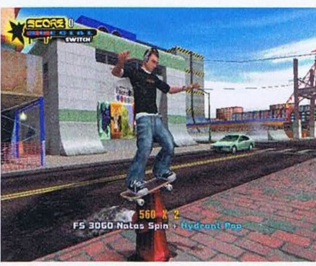


It's usually hard to distinguish between one basketball game and another, especially when it's part of a series. *NBA Street's* big selling point is that it's supposed to be ordinary 'homies' doing it on 'da' streets. (*You're not fooling anyone* – Ed.) However, as it doesn't use real-life leagues and therefore require a regular update, is it really needed?

Some of the courts and stars from the earlier games have returned, and they've been joined by new places and faces.The main alterations seem to have been made to the moves, which are now more arcadey, and the courts, which are even more radical and take *Street* a step further from its realistic sibling *NBA Live*.

Still, Kittsy swears by this series claming it to be 'the business'. Which, seeing as it doesn't involve killing, maiming or any other form of horrifying punishment, is high praise indeed. Join him, if you're so inclined, early next year.





△ **Geraint's patience with the *Tony Hawk's* series is beginning to wear thin. He doesn't have much patience, but plays turn-based strategy games. Odd.**

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 WORLD DESTRUCTION TOUR

Testing the boundaries of title word counts worldwide.



Okay, we've seen a bit more of this game recently. It's looking rather smooth and polished, as you'd expect a Tony Hawk's game to, although it's not really looking any *better* than you'd expect, which is slightly disappointing.

What we were happy to see were some new moves. There's the Natas spin, where you can spin your board round the top of a fire hydrant (should appeal to grind fans), and a kite-powered Franklin grind for one of the special characters, former US President Benjamin Franklin. (Fact fans, he died over 200 years ago, and the only grind he was famous for was grinding an axe, so he's doing pretty well to stand up on a skateboard, much less whip out a stars-and-stripes kite and pull tricks.)

That aside, the main thing that interested us was seeing more of Team Bam and Mr Margera himself – talk about stealing the show! The cut-scenes we saw had a real Jackass feel to them. You start off playing as Team Hawk, receiving challenges via text messages and getting new challenges as you skate round each level, but we reckon it's the tricks, interactive scenery and pratfalls that will really spice up this latest *Hawk's*.

Go underground this winter.



THE MOVIES

This game has spent a long time in development. Basically, it's a film studio sim with two main modes. Story mode allows you to start a studio in the 1920s and watch it grow to the present and Sandbox lets you make a single film. You've got to set budgets, choose and manage your stars (including shipping them off for cosmetic surgery). The choices you make can mean the difference between living in penthouse apartments and sipping paint thinner out of a paper bag on a street corner.

Expect *The Movies* to be on nationwide release in 2005.



TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2

We can almost *hear* you groaning from the office – but don't be too down on this. Even though it's hardly the most exciting platformer in the world, the first *Ty* was still solidly designed and perfectly enjoyable. This sequel retains all the platforming elements from the first game as well as the option to commander vehicles (like a submarine and a helicopter) and participate in *Mario Kart*-style races. Will wonders never cease?

Ty him down this October.



SPYRO: A HERO'S TALE

More Spyro, anyone? Yup it's more-of-the-same-time again – this time with the Purple gem collecting dragon. As you'd expect, the environments are simple but colourful and the platforming challenges are pretty easy going. The main addition this time is the inclusion of extra playable characters. Particularly noteworthy was a level that had you flying a rocket-propelled penguin around an island, bombing baddies and shooting vultures. Unusual.

Play the dragon in November.



△ **Looks like he'd be more at home in *Hitman*. Best do as he says.**

PREMIER MANAGER 2004-2005

The football season's beginning to get into gear now, and so are ZOO Digital, bringing *Premier Manager* back to the GBA on 29th October. It's been overhauled this time round, with an improved interface and 'superior logic system' designed to make it the most realistic football managament sim yet. We've seen screens with copious amounts of info on them, and we wonder how workable that'll be on the GBA's screen. Expect a review next issue.

MOST WANTED
UK GAMES AWARDS 2004

The shortlists are ready and the final round of voting is primed to begin. Tell us who your winners are and you could win an amazing prize!



Get your votes in, because Most Wanted is drawing to a close pretty soon. After what seems like months (probably because it has been) we're into the home straight of voting on the Most Wanted Awards 2004. The people running the show have put in countless hours overtime logging your nominations to produce the shortlist of games you see opposite. Gamecube games appear in almost every category (there's even a rogue Game Boy Advance title that's sneaked into the GC shortlist, but that's the power of Pokémon…). And if you do feel the urge to vote in the Most Wanted PC Game category, er, do feel free…

These are the most important awards in the videogame calendar, as they look to the future and the exciting new games just around the corner, rather than those we finished playing about a year ago.

As a bonus, every vote you make enters you into the draw for a fantastic prize – with a widescreen TV, surround sound speakers, new Gamecube and every winning game from each Most Wanted category being top of the list.

It's up to you now…



△ **Are you looking forward to the drumming insanity of *Donkey Konga?***

THE MOST WANTED PRIZE

Is this the best prize ever assembled? Reckon so. We only have eyes for Nintendo as you know, but we always did have a thing about owning every home console in existence and then some… The lucky, lucky winner of the MOST WANTED PRIZE will receive the following:

- A widescreen TV
- Surround sound speakers
- Gamecube
- PC
- PlayStation 2
- Xbox
- The winning game title from each **MOST WANTED** category.

AND THE NOMINEES FOR MOST WANTED UK GAMES 2004 ARE...

(Fumble, fumble) Hang on, if we can just get this envelope open…

MOST WANTED GAMECUBE GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	VOTING CODE
Donkey Konga	Nintendo	GC1
Metroid Prime 2: Echoes	Nintendo	GC2
Paper Mario 2	Nintendo	GC3
Pokémon: Fire Red/Leaf Green	Nintendo	GC4
Resident Evil 4	Capcom	GC5
Second Sight	Codemasters	GC6
Star Fox	Nintendo	GC7
The Legend Of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures	Nintendo	GC8
TimeSplitters: Future Perfect	EA	GC9
Viewtiful Joe 2	Capcom	GC10

MOST WANTED PC GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	VOTING CODE
Doom 3	Activision	PC1
Ghost Recon 2	Ubisoft	PC2
Half-Life 2	Vivendi	PC3
Richard Burns Rally	SCi	PC4
Rome: Total War	Activision	PC5
STALKER	THQ	PC6
Star Wars: KOTOR2	Activision	PC7
LOTR: The Battle For Middle-Earth	EA	PC8
Warhamer 40,000: Dawn Of War	THQ	PC9
World Of Warcraft	Vivendi	PC10

MOST WANTED XBOX GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	VOTING CODE
Brothers In Arms	Ubisoft	XB1
Call Of Duty	Activision	XB2
Doom 3	Activision	XB3
Fable	Microsoft	XB4
Forza Motorsport	Microsoft	XB5
Halo 2	Microsoft	XB6
Jade Empire	Microsoft	XB7
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	XB8
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell 3	Ubisoft	XB9
WWE WrestleMania XXI	THQ	XB10

MOST WANTED PLAYSTATION 2 GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	VOTING CODE
Devil May Cry 3	Capcom	PS1
Gran Turismo 4	Sony	PS2
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Rockstar	PS3
Killzone	Sony	PS4
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Konami	PS5
Prince Of Persia 2	Ubisoft	PS6
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	PS7
The Getaway: Black Monday	Sony	PS8
TimeSplitters: Future Perfect	EA	PS9
WWE Smackdown! Vs. Raw	THQ	PS10



MOST WANTED DRIVING GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Forza Motorsport	Microsoft	Xbox	DG1
Gran Turismo 4	Sony	PS2	DG2
Need For Speed Underground 2	EA	GC, PC, PS2, Xbox	DG3
OutRun2	SEGA	Xbox	DG4
Richard Burns Rally	SCi	PC	DG5

MOST WANTED ACTION/ADVENTURE GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Rockstar	PS2	AA1
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Konami	PS2	AA2
Prince Of Persia 2	Ubisoft	PS2	AA3
Resident Evil 4	Capcom	GC	AA4
Zelda: Four Swords	Nintendo	GC	AA5

MOST WANTED FPS GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Doom 3	Activision	PC	FP1
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	EA	PS2/GC/Xbox	FP2
Half-Life 2	Vivendi	PC	FP3
Halo 2	Microsoft	Xbox	FP4
Killzone	Sony	PS2	FP5

MOST WANTED SPORTS GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Championship Manager 5	Eidos	PC	SG1
Football Manager 2005	SEGA	PC	SG2
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	PC/PS2/Xbox	SG3
WWE SmackDown! Vs. Raw	THQ	PS2	SG4
WWE WrestleMania XXI	THQ	Xbox	SG5

MOST WANTED STRATEGY & RPG GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
The Lord Of The Rings	EA	PC	SRP1
Roller Coaster Tycoon 3	Atari	PC	SRP2
Rome: Total War	Activision	PC	SRP3
The Sims 2	EA	PC	SRP4
Warhammer: Dawn Of War	THQ	PC	SRP5

HOW TO VOTE FOR YOUR MOST WANTED UK GAMES 2004

Got a portable telephone receiver or a personal computation machine equipped with a connection to the World Wide Web? Then you, dear reader, can do this…



SMS:

1. Txt MOSTWANTED followed by a space.
2. Then the VOTING CODE (eg DG1).
3. To be entered into the competition to win the MOSTWANTED PRIZE, you need to answer the following tie-breaker question in no more than 140 characters: I like the game I've voted for because…
4. Send your txt to 83130 (message costs 25p inc VAT plus your normal text cost).

ONLINE:

1. You can also vote by logging on to the gamesradar.com website. All you need to do is click on the MOST WANTED logo, and follow the instructions. To be entered into the competition to win the MOST WANTED PRIZE you need to answer the following tie-breaker question in no more than 140 characters: I like the game I've voted for because…



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Text messages cost 25p Inc VAT plus your normal text cost. Service provider: Opera Telecom, B1 2JB. The closing date for entries is 30/09/2004. The winner of the Most Wanted Prize will be notified by telephone on 15/10/04. Multiple entries are allowed. Terms and conditions apply. This competition is not exclusive to this magazine. The editor's decision is final; no correspondence will be entered into. Entrants must not be an employee, agent or subcontractor of the promoters, or a relative of any of those persons. The promoter is Future Publishing Limited, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW, Company No: 02008885. No purchase necessary. There is no alternative to the prizes stated. The address for postal entries is 'Most Wanted UK Games Awards 2004', Future Plus, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. Proof of posting will not be taken as proof of delivery. Winners' names will not be published. Written requests for details will be honoured.



THREE'S THE MAGIC NUMBER

A lot's happened in the world since Gamecube was launched. War, World Cups, celebrity divorces – what a rollercoaster ride. At least Nintendo's box has been there to take our minds off it...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Gamecube is three-years-old this month. Time for a slice of cake and a bit of reflection…



The purple box was born in Japan on 14th September. Has it really been three years since we were hounding Nintendo for a release date? Seems like only yesterday. And yet, here we are, gently tipping over what's seen as the peak of a console's traditional five-year lifespan. In human years Gamecube's 40-something, and a blubbery mid-life midriff built up through years of excess should be forming nicely. Are the best years really behind it, though?

Well, thankfully, there's no sign of it running out of steam just yet. In fact the year ahead looks suprisingly perky. We might have seen the odd third-party hanger-on being shed (we think we'll just about survive without another *BMX XXX*), but Nintendo are still delivering the goods, albeit in a somewhat delayed fashion at times.

The fact is that developers need this long to get to grips with the machine and wrestle all the performance they can from it. What are we on now? Third-generation Gamecube games? And both *Resident Evil 4* and *New Zelda* seem to be pulling even more out of the system.

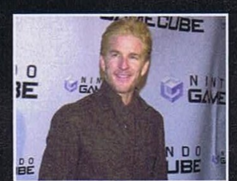
We'll be first to admit that this Christmas' line-up looks a little less stacked with gems than previous years – but then it's still packing in *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes*, *Paper Mario* and *GoldenEye*.

2005 already looks like it'll shape up as a classic year for Gamecube, with *Resi 4*, *Star Fox* and two *Zelda* games (if *Four Swords* slips as well) – we're talking 2002 vintage here.

The old girl looks in good shape…

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
"Matthew Modine"

HOW IT FELL TOGETHER

YEAR	GAMECUBE HIGH-POINTS	GAMECUBE LOW-POINTS
2001	**THE LAUNCH!** ■ *Okay, it was a surprisingly muted reception on day one. The expected queues did snake around the streets of Tokyo's Akihabara electronics district on the Friday morning, but they were much shorter than those that formed for the launch of GBA earlier in the year. Still, at least the system was here. Or rather there. The US launch was staggering. Following a launch party in New York where celebrities such as Matthew Modine mixed with lowlife like us, the system arrived on 18th November. In the first 24 hours, $98 million worth of consoles and games were sold.* 	**EURO NO-GO** ■ *If countries had hands and eyes and mouths, the UK, Germany, France and the rest of Europe would have been sitting staring out of the window, drumming their giant tectonic fingers and sighing quietly to themselves. The relentless rumours of a Euro release date for Gamecube were just draining, with even a Christmas 2002 date mooted. Nintendo wouldn't confirm or deny a date as they didn't want to 'make people angry'.*
2002	**THE LAUNCH! (PART 2)**  ■ *Gamecube finally touched down in the UK on 3rd May. Pre-orders had rocketed to around 50,000, although many independent retailers we spoke to were gutted at their allocation of consoles (ie. they wanted more).* ■ *Nintendo claimed first blood in the console battle, with Microsoft deciding to drop the price of Xbox by £100 after four painful weeks of sales. Nintendo dropped the price of Gamecube to £130 before it even launched.*	**FUNNY OLD YEAR**  ■ *Nintendo and Rare's partnership ended, meaning no prospect of* Perfect Dark *or* Banjo-Kazooie *appearing on Gamecube.* ■ *In the UK at least, the lack of AAA titles in the busy Christmas period is all-too obvious…*
2003	**BETTER THAN EVER** ■ *Fact: more people bought a Gamecube in the UK this year than in the launch year.* Metroid Prime *was re-released for £20 within six months.* The Wind Waker *arrived in the UK. Third-party support shone through, with the likes of* Hitman 2, Freedom Fighters *and* Viewtiful Joe. *Nintendo slashed the price of the console to £80 at the end of the year and sales increased 400%. There was never a better time to buy Gamecube…* 	**E3** ■ *Perhaps it's the fact that this year's game expo saw Nintendo steal the limelight that makes last year's effort look so shoddy. The sight of Miyamoto unveiling…* Pac-Man *made us want to cry salty tears of hideous pain.* 



GROWING UP...

How lessons learned from the launch of Gamecube can Revolutionise Nintendo.

It's fair to say that the first three years of Gamecube's life have been a mixed bag. It took a while for the momentum to build – you buy a new Nintendo console to play a new Mario game, and you initially didn't get that opportunity with Gamecube. And even when it did arrive, it wasn't a 'proper' Mario game – although still stood head and shoulders above its wannabe peers on rival machines.

As reported back in **NGC**/61, the Japanese launch on September 14th 2001 saw 174,856 Gamecubes sold out of 450,000 delivered to stores, along with 178,352 copies of



MOST SIGNIFICANT GAMES	SHIGSY SAID...	THE REAL WORLD
LUIGI'S MANSION ■ *Welsh pundit G. Evans said it was 'genuinely original' and 'a joy to play' and 'slightly lacking in depth'. He gave it 90%.* **SMASH BROS** ■ *The Super Melee kicked off in Japan in November. Mark Green described it as 'Gamecube's best game'. Bless him.* **SUPER MONKEY BALL** ■ *Sega's 'insane banana-'em-up' provided a longer, better launch game than Nintendo's own first-party developers.*	**"ONLINE"** ■ *"We can't make an online game that uses the internet until the technology makes it into enough homes, but we did need to prepare the Gamecube for that eventuality in the future."*  ■ *"There are a large number of online games in development..."*	**BUSH** ■ *20th January: George W Bush became President of the United States.* ■ *5th February: Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman announced they'd separated.* ■ *7th June: The Labour party won a second term in office.* ■ *19th July: Jeffrey Archer went down.* ■ *6th September: The US Justice Department announced they wouldn't be seeking to split up Microsoft.*
MARIO SUNSHINE ■ *Released in Japan on 19th July and the UK on 4th October. 'Renders the opposition utterly irrelevant' we said.* **METROID PRIME** ■ *Didn't arrive in Europe until March 2003, but hit the US in November. Geraint gave it 96%. "GC's finest hour to date..."* **ZELDA: WIND WAKER** ■ *Zelda no Densetsu: Kaze no Takuto was a Christmas treat for Japan. We said it was 'far too good for children'.*	**"LINK"**  ■ *"I felt we'd be able to give Link a greater sense of character and life. We wanted to make his face bigger and more expressive. There are some areas where Link's face is pressed up against the wall and sort of looking around and it adds a lot of character to the game..."*	**PRETZEL** ■ *1st January: Euro banknotes and coins introduced in Europe.* ■ *13th January: President Bush fainted after choking on a pretzel.* ■ *1st March: US invaded Afghanistan.* ■ *3rd June: The Party in the Palace.* ■ *31st May-June 30th: 17th World Cup held in Japan and South Korea.* ■ *18th November: UN weapons inspectors arrived in Iraq.*
MARIO KART DD!! ■ *"Supreme multiplayer and an expanded GP mode add up to the best Mario Kart ever." The Christmas No.1.* **SOUL CALIBUR 2** ■ *Geraint still takes on Jes at this during lunch hours. Although he doesn't actually 'take him' because he's rubbish.* **F-ZERO GX** ■ *We'd been waiting for this for years – it's amazing stuff, but launched too close to Mario Kart for our liking...*	**"CUSTOMERS"** *"While it's good to have many different titles on Nintendo platforms, what's more important is that we make titles only Nintendo customers can play. That's why it's important for Nintendo to come up with the best first-party titles and to create unique entertainment experiences."* 	**TURKEY** ■ *9th February: Cricket World Cup starts in South Africa.* ■ *19th March: US start bombing Iraq.* ■ *23rd March: Australia win Cricket World Cup, beating India.* ■ *24th May: Turkey win Eurovision.* ■ *24th October: Concorde makes its last commercial flight.*

the three launch games – roughly one for every console sold.

The reasons for the 'quiet' launch were attributed to the terrorist atrocities in the US three days before, a recession, shaky marketing and the 'unusual' launch line-up. "Launching Gamecube with Luigi as the star is akin to using Stephen Baldwin as a marquee actor in a blockbuster movie," said market watcher Steven Kent of MSNBC. "People know the name, but they're more likely to buy tickets to see his brother."

So what can Nintendo learn from the launch of Gamecube which they can apply a couple of years down the line with Revolution? Make sure the supply of games in the first year presses all the right buttons, for a start. Anyone remember Christmas 2002? The nauseating holiday season that gave us the tedious *Starfox Adventures* and dull-as-dishwater *Mario Party 4*, while the competition romped home with staggering sales figures. Hopefully this was a wake-up call for Nintendo, and they should now realise that going forward they need to concentrate on releasing games *intelligently*. That means preparing well enough in advance to deliver when the time is right.

They need to have at least one of their superstar names bundled with the machine, and it needs to be an old-school Nintendo epic rather than something you can finish in ten hours. Give it a game so good that people will feel their lives are pointless if they don't own the console. And throw in two joypads, a demo disc and a SCART lead as well.

Nintendo need to get the balance right between having the arrogance to tell us what they think we need and listening to their public. And make sure Marketing can do justice to the quality rolling out of R&D. And give away a Reggie Fils-Aime figurine with every console...



Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.

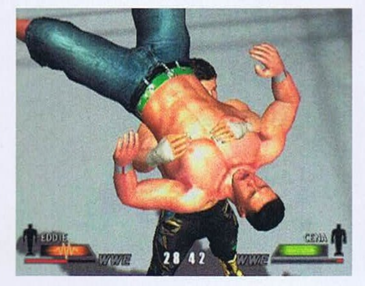
NGC THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE!

REVIEWS

ANIMAL CROSSING

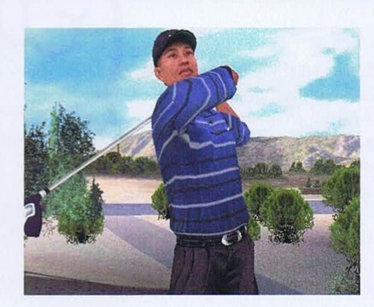
Don't just talk to the animals – run errands, tidy the town, fill the museum and *slave* for the animals… P38

WARNING! SPOILERS AHOY! OUR REVIEWS CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFO!



WWE DAY OF RECKONING

We reckon this is a distinct improvement over the old wrestling games – although our appetite for sweaty men still only goes so far. P44



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

He may not be the all-conquering golfer he was in his youth, but Tiger's still got the ability to score a hole in one with his videogame. Yes. P46



POKÉMON FIRE RED/LEAF GREEN

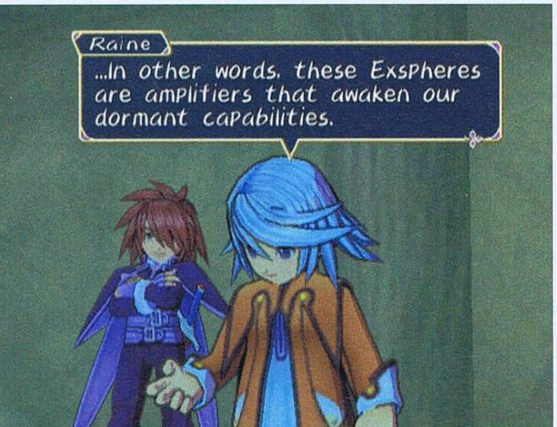
Ancient monster-fighting titles get dragged out of retirement and booted into line with the later ones. Pokémanics rejoice. Marcus cries. P52

OTHER REVIEWS...

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the most comprehensive on Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you loads of detail. We don't rest until we've played a game enough to pinpoint ALL of its strengths and weaknesses, and be able to deliver the most honest, no-nonsense verdicts around.





TALES OF SYMPHONIA

We're submerged beneath a sludgy, hackneyed plot, we're fighting constant battles and watching twee cut-scenes. *And we love it.* It can all mean only one thing – the arrival of a traditional RPG.

P56

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

0-24
Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this game is crud.

25-49
A disappointing title, stashed with nasty faults and likely to be short on any quality.

50-74
Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.

75-89
Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.

90+
Rarely awarded, a 90+ is essential. Buy with confidence.



THE SCORE BAR

The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS
Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with some quick plus and minus points.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suitable suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS
Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY
How well does the game make use of the Gamecube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN
Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? This is where you'll find out for sure...

VERDICT
We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict as to whether you should bother purchasing a game.

+
- Useful.
- Stripy.
- Easy to see, easy to use.



–
- Doesn't do anything interesting.
- Not worth spending time on.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Level Crossing
Railwaycom
NGC/16, 55%
The barriers go down, a train passes, then the barriers go up again. Helpful, no?



8 VISUALS
Not exactly pretty, but completely obvious to cars.

4 SOUNDS
Some go beep-nuts to help the blind. Some don't.

8 MASTERY
You want to cross the road and cars stop for you. Excellent.

10 LIFESPAN
Well, have you ever seen a worn-out *Zebra Crossing*? Have you?

VERDICT
Everyone likes *Zebra Crossing*, even Geraint. *Roundabouts*, however can [blork] his learner-driving [bleep].

NGC 88

MEET THE NGC TEAM

The inhabitants of Animal Crossing want ASBOs put on this lot...



MARCUS
Spent several days wandering around his town. Sobbed when we broke the news to him – there is no pub.



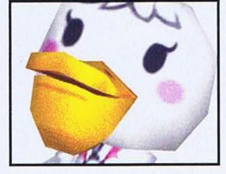
PAUL
"It's got a beach, dude!" Paul yelled excitedly. Was less happy to discover that the beach bunnies really are rabbits.



KITTSY
Chose the metal-floored house because "you can hose it clean". Everyone hides their memory cards when Martin's around...



GERAINT
No longer claims we treat him like a dog – he's seen that we treat dogs much better. And Geraint's not allowed a guitar, either.



MIM
It's survival of the cutest in Mim's town. "The ugly ones should leave. I don't want them stinking the place up," she barfed.



DEBBIE
After spending eight hours in the tailor's designing new outfits, Debbie still complained that she had "nowt" to wear.


△ You can buy a spade from Tom Nook's shop.


△ Look at that! Lovely. Apart from the hole. Hmm.

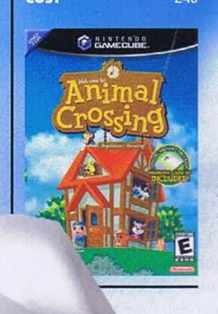

△ Get a fishing rod and you can go fishing here.

NGC STAR GAME

ANIMAL CROSSING



PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE	24TH SEPT
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	59
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



It's like The Island of Dr Moreau, but with less vivisection and more rotary club meetings.

Animal Crossing is quite unlike anything you'll have played before. On first impressions it's a cute, typically 'Nintendo' game. Festooned with anthropomorphic characters, slathered in chunky, primary-coloured graphics and possessing all the streetwise attitude of Mickey Mouse, it appears to the casual observer to be yet another identikit kiddie pleaser. But it's not. And if any game deserved to be played, to have its hidden depths uncovered for the world to see, it's this one.

Nintendo have always billed *Animal Crossing* as a 'communication game', and that's as good a description as any. As you probably know, it's all about living within the idyllic community of Animal Crossing, interacting with the locals, running errands, looking after the place, and so on. It's sounds dull but it isn't, because the game really is astonishingly playable.

Take the real-time clock, for example, constantly slaved to real-world time. Check your diary and you'll find special events, such as carnivals and meteor showers, happening on particular dates; the guitar-playing dog only appears on Saturday nights; and Hallowe'en and other important dates are celebrated. Things happen while you're not playing and, on the flip side of this, you're often rewarded for exploring and being up and about when you shouldn't be. In addition, the seasons change, there's differing weather and things grow and alter. For a cartoonish-looking videogame, there's a tangible sense of Animal

> "DIG UP FOSSILS... CATCH JELLYFISH... PLANT TREES... TEACH THEM CATCHPHRASES"





△ Beware the sinister intentions of the ani-men.



△ It looks basic, but it's still utterly mesmerising.



△ About to dig a trap for the hideous cat-man…



△ We haven't found any mosquito repellent yet. Or any way to get rid of mosquitos. Still, it doesn't matter – THEY'RE NOT REAL.


△ This is our character at the Reichenbach falls, just after doing away with Professor Moriarty.



△ You don't want to see Mim's personal messages. They have a tendency to be less than polite and even downright insulting. You don't mess with Mim's patch.


△ One of the first things Tom Nook will ask you to do is plant some greenery outside the rotten shack he calls a shop. Still, it makes it all look a bit nicer, eh?

A NICE PLACE TO VISIT

*In the **NGC** office there's a message board war being waged between Marcus, Mim and your humble scribe. Where will it end? Until one victor remains standing, or Mim stops digging holes in front of my house, probably.*









Crossing being a living, breathing place.

You can dig up fossils, send them off to be analysed and display them in the museum. Go fishing. Catch jellyfish – but only in August, when the time is right. Plant flowers and trees. Write letters to your neighbours, and carry out elaborate fetch-quests on their behalf. Get to know them well enough and you can teach them catchphrases. Design a fancy enough pattern for your clothes at the local tailor's and you might spark the next fashion craze. Conversely, let Animal Crossing fall into rack and ruin by ignoring the weeding, being surly to the townsfolk and failing to be a productive member of the community, and people might move away. Even to a real-life friend's town, the ultimate insult.

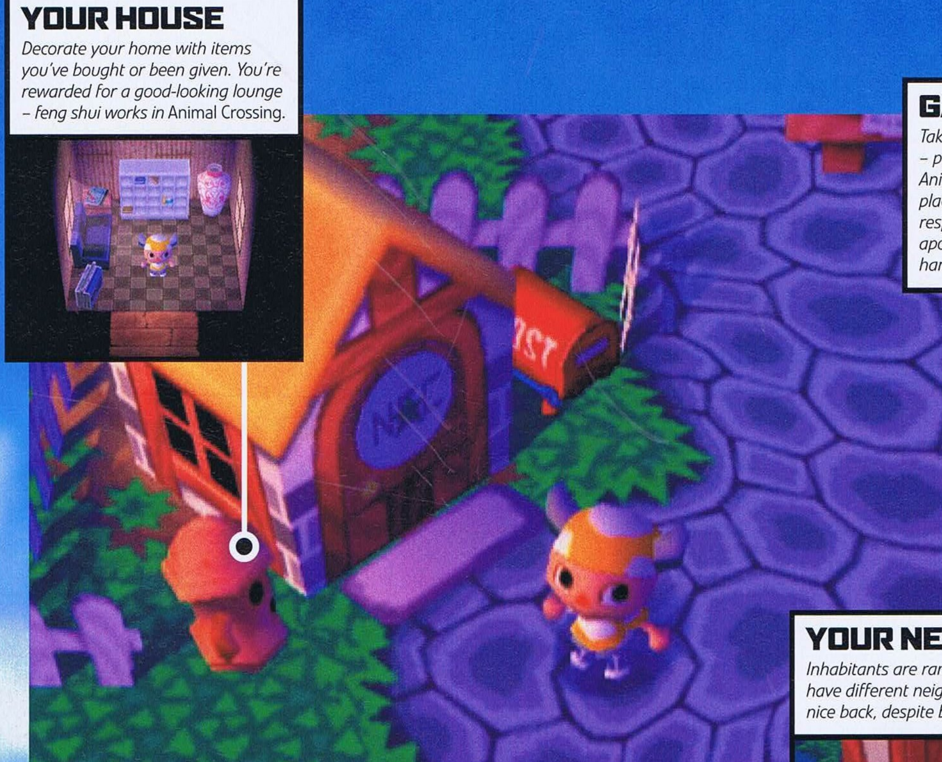
This last point is the key to *Animal Crossing's* appeal. The sheer wealth of things to do and how you interact with the community is compelling enough, but it's when friends get involved that the game *really* comes alive. Up to four people can play in one town – but not simultaneously. Visiting Animal Crossing and seeing how your friends have altered it, how they've related to the characters therein, and what presents and messages they might have left for you, is beguiling. Hopping on the train to visit another player's town – simply by sticking their memory card in slot B – is equally as fascinating. They'll have unique items and characters, so if cherries don't grow in your town, you can half-inch some of theirs and introduce them to your community. It's endlessly, tremendously fun.

Nonetheless, *Animal Crossing* is divisive. On the one hand, it's utterly charming and refreshingly gentle – the point is not to get to the next level or to open up unlockable content and claim high scores. It's about making your own entertainment, literally playing the game how you want to play it, with pleasure derived from the situations you create. Under the right conditions (ie, with friends who'll play it too) it's hugely absorbing and laugh-out-



GIFT GIVING

*Fancy sending **NGC** a gift? The names of our characters are Mim, Marcus and Jes, and the town is NGCTown – when sending gifts, names are case-sensitive. Send us your name, too, and you might receive gifts from the **NGC** team! Email us at the usual address with the subject 'Animal Crossing'.*



YOUR HOUSE
Decorate your home with items you've bought or been given. You're rewarded for a good-looking lounge – feng shui works in Animal Crossing.

GARDEN GROWS
Take good care of your surroundings – plant trees and flowers and make Animal Crossing a genuinely nice place to live and the inhabitants will respond in kind. Turn it into a post-apocalyptic wasteland, on the other hand, and they'll move out.

YOUR NEIGHBOURS
Inhabitants are randomised, so most players will have different neighbours. Be nice and they'll be nice back, despite being enormous animal-things.





DIG IN
Once you get hold of a spade, take it everywhere and dig in suspicious-looking spots – you can find treasure, fossils and all sorts of items. You can also dig up the flowers other people have lovingly planted. But that'd be evil…



△ Blaire is a flirtatious female chipmunk. We think that's all that needs to be said, really.



△ Tom Nook is evil. He OWNS YOU. Free yourself from his tyrannical grasp!



△ Now then, who's been dumping coral outside the shop? Bet it's Marcus.

loud fun; indeed, the reason we've enjoyed it so much is that it's easy for anyone in the office to simply boot up the game and chop down Geraint's trees, for example, or

IT'S EASY FOR ANYONE IN THE OFFICE TO BOOT UP THE GAME AND CHOP DOWN GER'S TREES

leave threatening messages (which, y'know, isn't quite in the spirit that the game should be played, but as long as you're having fun…)

And therein lies the rub. On your own, *Animal Crossing* can be an engrossing affair, but it's largely dependent on your willingness to run errands, sell fruit and potter around, and your tolerance for outright cuteness and largely undramatic gameplay. Without other people to play with, the game can simply become repetitive and aimless. Swapping stories about what's happened and relating anecdotes is half of the fun of *Animal Crossing*, and without that element it sometimes feels like half a game.

That criticism aside – along with the fact that it plainly shows its N46 origins in many ways, not least graphically – there's still an endless spiral of things to love about *Animal Crossing*. The genuinely useful connectivity, for example, which enables you to download NES games, travel to a tropical island and even remotely view it, or the ingenious password system that lets you swap gifts by phone or email.

Yes, it's an old game, and one that Europe should have had the pleasure of playing long before now (it came out in Japan on the N64 literally years ago). And it's one that's incredibly difficult to describe – if you even got half an inkling of what it's about then this review has done its job. But ultimately, what *Animal Crossing* delivers to your Gamecube is nothing less than a whole new world, and one that you really should visit.

JES BICKHAM



BETTER LATE…
Animal Crossing came out in the US a year ago, and many NGC readers imported the game. Is the UK one worth getting if you've played the US version? Only if you have friends who are going to play it, as getting into hock with Tom Nook again will be tiresome if you go it alone.



- Heaps to do.
- Fabulous script.
- Brilliant with friends.



- Nauseatingly cute.
- Repetitive.
- Requires friends to get the most from it.

IF YOU LIKE THIS…
Harvest Moon
Konami
NGC/91 90%
Much more straightforward than *Animal Crossing* but similarly absorbing.



5 VISUALS
It's literally an old N64 game. So, basic but colourful.

6 SOUNDS
Jaunty tunes, nonsense speak and simple effects.

6 MASTERY
Only pushes the hardware in that there's so much of it.

9 LIFESPAN
Potentially endless, but your interest will eventually wane.

VERDICT
A genuinely new type of game. Entrancing, engrossing and saccharine-sweet, it's simple but brilliant.





"A game where family members could come together"



TALK WITH THE ANIMALS!

We interview the masterminds behind Animal Crossing.

Straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak…



nimal Crossing, as you now know, is a remarkable game. It's something new; something fresh; something *different*. And it's more fun than you can shake a fat bag of skunks at. To celebrate the UK release of the game we were the only UK magazine given the chance to sit down with the game's creators, Mr Tezuka and Mr Eguchi. We pumped them for the contents of their brain-orbs, which after all were responsible for one of the most original and entertaining games we've ever played. Hear them speak – now! (Or, rather, read what they said. Um.)

NGC: Could you tell us a little bit about yourselves and how you arrived at Nintendo?
Takashi Tezuka: Hello! I am Mr Tezuka and I've been at Nintendo for almost 20 years. I started as a designer and eventually became a director and producer. I've worked mainly on the Super Mario series and the Yoshi series. And concerning how I first got a job at Nintendo, just like everybody else I applied to the company and was fortunate enough to be hired!

NGC: How did the idea for *Animal Crossing* come about?
Katsuya Eguchi: Hi, I'm Mr Eguchi, the director of *Animal Crossing*. The game originated from thinking about games that you have to fight and attack in; they're sometimes very tiring. So I wanted a game that could make you feel relaxed and was a very easy, accessible game to play. Plus I wanted to make a game where family members could come together and play as one. I myself am very busy with my job, so I hope I made a game that allows me not to be neglected by my other family members.

NGC: What was the reaction like when you unveiled the concept internally at Nintendo?
TT: The people who actually worked on the game were very positive and had a very good feeling about the title, as you'd expect, but actually there were many negative opinions too. Our President, Mr Iwata, thought it was interesting and exciting when we showed him the *Animal Crossing* concept – I still remember that.

NGC: How much did the game change from original concept to the finished product?
TT: The initial concept didn't change during development, and that was that several players could share the same field of play, and the actions of other players were reflected in the field, and everybody could look at the other players' actions. The other concept was to offer many communication items and ideas through *Animal Crossing*, both inside and outside the game world.

NGC: Where did the idea for using GC's internal clock start?
TT: We had an idea to make a different piece of hardware with that clock function in it, but we eventually ended up using specific software for the clock function.

NGC: How did you choose the animals that would appear in the game? Why is there a raccoon in charge, for instance?
TT: First we thought about what kind of functions this game should have, functions necessary for the concept. And second we thought about what characteristics or personalities would fit those kind of functions. And finally we thought about the animals which had those characteristics and personalities, and that's how we came up with the animals in this game.

Concerning the raccoon, when we were thinking about the furniture, we couldn't have a different icon for every bit of furniture, so we had to have an icon that represented it all. We decided on a leaf that would turn into the furniture. In Japan, raccoons are traditionally thought to be very clever animals, and they can change themselves into different people or different animals using a leaf. So that's why we chose the raccoon.

NGC: The scripting is excellent – what challenges did you face when it was localised from Japanese into English?
TT: Concerning the script, we actually do not know whether the localisation was difficult or not, but I think if a lot of people are impressed by the script it is due to the efforts of the staff who have translated the Japanese into English. The difficulty we had was actually the culture problem, because there are so many traditional Japanese features in the game, and there are obviously features that are Europe-specific or US-specific. For example, the senses, and the feelings and how people speak vary differently from country to country. So that was a big difficulty. Plus the amount of text in the script was very large compared to other games, so that was a challenge for them too.

NGC: What are your fondest memories of creating *AC*?
TT: There are too many fond memories! So I'm afraid I can't pick any right now.

NGC: How did you celebrate finishing the game?
TT: When we finish developing any game at Nintendo, we have a celebration party. For *Animal Crossing*, we held a Japanese barbecue party.

NGC: How is work on *Animal Crossing 2* progressing? What new features will we see?
TT: I am sorry I can't talk about the specifics but we are working on the DS version of *Animal Crossing*, so please look forward to it.

NGC: Shigeru Miyamoto described *Animal Crossing* as a 'communication' game – are you planning on expanding on this idea in other titles?
TT: More than a 'communication' game, I think it is one that doesn't need special skills – it's something everybody can play easily. I think that kind of easily accessible game could be expanded on.

NGC: What opportunities would you like to see on the next generation of home and handheld Nintendo consoles?
TT: I cannot talk about what kind of future the new consoles have. But the main concept of this game is to support communication between people and players. So the idea of having communication with people far away, or with many people, using online systems for example, is very interesting and we would like to think about that. But unless the obstacles we have concerning online games, such as the cost and the sophisticated technology, are solved, it won't be easy to jump into that field.

THE BEASTIE BOYS

The men who put the zing in Animal Cross-zing. Check it!



TAKASHI TEZUKA

- Born in Osaka City, Osaka prefecture, on November 17th, 1960
- Graduated from Design Department of Osaka University of Arts
- Started working for Nintendo Co., Ltd in April 1984
- Currently General Manager of EAD Software Designing Department, Entertainment Analysis & Development Division
- **Games Tezuka worked on:**
  As Game Designer…
  Super Mario series
  The Legend of Zelda series
  As Producer…
  Yoshi series
  Animal Crossing series



KATSUYA EGUCHI

- Born in Fuchu City, Tokyo, on April 7th, 1965
- Graduated from Computer Graphics Department of Japan Electronics College
- Started working for Nintendo Co., Ltd in April 1986
- Currently Deputy Manager of EAD Software Designing Section, EAD Software Designing Department, Entertainment Analysis & Development Division (that must be some business card he carries around…)
- **Games Eguchi worked on:**
  As Level Designer…
  Super Mario World (Super Famicom/SNES
  As Game Designer…
  Star Fox (Super Famicom/SNES)
  Wave Race 64 (Nintendo 64)
  Animal Crossing series

"A full roster of 35 WWE performers is available"



△ This is the best-looking grapple game we've seen.



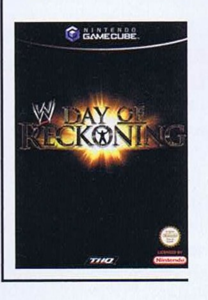
△ The roster includes 30 current stars and five legends.



△ You'll need to earn cash in Story mode in order to unlock extra arenas, like this impressive replica of Madison Square Garden at WrestleMania XX. There are also venues for a slew of pay-per-views and TV shows.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	THQ
DEVELOPER	YUKE'S
RELEASE DATE	24TH SEPT
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	32
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



WWE DAY OF RECKONING

The lords of the ring are back for more action – only this time some of them are wearing lingerie…



After the folly that was last year's *WWE WrestleMania XIX* – wandering around building sites and beating up workmen – *WWE Day of Reckoning* has gone back to basics.

> **IT'S NOT POSSIBLE TO PLAY THE MAIN SINGLE-PLAYER MODE AS A WWE SUPERSTAR**

If by 'basics' you mean 'breaking chairs over people's heads and winning matches by tearing your opponent's clothes off', that is. But more of that later.

The crux of this year's WWE grapple frenzy lies in the fact that *WrestleMania XIX's* peculiar Revenge mode has been eschewed in favour of a new Story function. And, believe us, it's a massive improvement. Story mode sees you guiding a rookie grappler from his very first match, fresh out of wrestling boot camp, to appearances on Sunday Night Heat, and continuing your career all the way through to being scouted for membership of top WWE team Evolution and appearing in Raw main events.

Developers Yuke's haven't tried to be too clever here and have largely stuck with the formula that they've perfected in their long-running PlayStation 2 Smackdown series. The key difference between those games and *Day of Reckoning* is that you can only play Story mode as either a character that you've created yourself or as one of eight generic models each with predetermined attributes – so it's not actually possible to participate in the main single-player mode as a WWE superstar. We found having to play as an unknown pretty disappointing. Admittedly, this zero-to-hero concept is a more realistic approach for a Story mode but if you're after realism, you probably shouldn't be buying a wrestling product in the first place. And surely half the point of grapple games is that they provide you with the chance to 'be' beefcake



BACK TO SCHOOL

A Tutorial section takes you through from absolute fundamentals to the more complex end of the grappling spectrum. You may notice trademark offence from non-WWE grapplers is included to give depth to the move sets: we spotted manoeuvres from Vader and New Japan Pro Wrestling's Yuji Nagata.

MATCH OF THE DAY

Here's what's on offer if your needs are rather more specialist…



Exhibition mode features just eight 'speciality' matches. The choice palls in comparison to that of the PS2 Smackdown games.



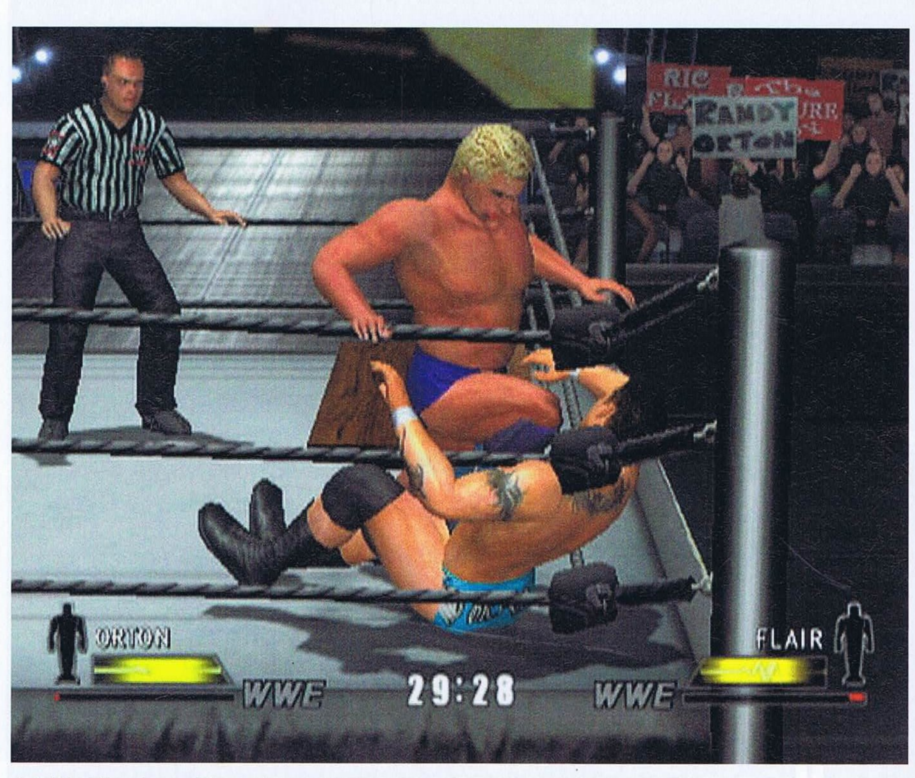
Other match types (like Cage and Ladder) have been improved. During Table bouts, for example, it's easier to roll your foe onto the furniture.



The one new match type is the Bra & Panties bout. The choice of ladies is limited: just Victoria, Trish Stratus, Stacy Keibler and a bald Molly Holly.




Weapons have a limited lifespan. Wrestlers are now also more prone to bleeding, although the female characters remain gore-free.



△ Oddly, it's only possible to play as a WWE 'superstar' in single Exhibition matches.



△ Early foes are fictional.



△ Submissions are improved.



△ The coach sets initial objectives.

heroes like The Rock, Undertaker or, um, Garrison Cade.

LADY RUCK

Elsewhere, the Exhibition mode (in which a full roster of 35 WWE performers is available) offers the usual selection of one-off matches, this time with the addition of Bra & Panties bouts in which you can choose from a total of four (count 'em!) 'divas' with whom to tussle in customary clothes-ripping fashion. Fans of polygonal orange laydeez may be disappointed, though, by the strange oversight of Torrie Wilson not being included.

The fighting system is largely familiar and displays Yuke's trademark blend of accessibility (most moves are just a matter of tapping A or B plus a direction) and the ability to execute a huge array of different manoeuvres. But it's not a hugely sophisticated interface and, with the frequent preprogrammed sequences that kick in, you don't always feel in total control of your character, while success can still hinge on nothing more refined than button bashing.

Ultimately, *Day of Reckoning* feels like a scaled-down version of last year's *Smackdown Here Comes The Pain* for PS2 but with added graphical sheen. It's still not quite the definitive WWE-branded Gamecube grapple-'em-up that we were hoping for – but it's a marked improvement over its pair of WrestleMania predecessors.

OLIVER HURLEY

> **YUKE'S HAVE STUCK WITH THE FORMULA PERFECTED IN THE SMACKDOWN SERIES**



LAST CHANCE SALOON

If you're taking an absolute pounding, it's still possible to make a last-minute comeback. Keep an eye out for the Day of Reckoning logo flashing in the corner of the screen, hit A and B together at the right moment and you'll pull off a Momentum Shift which puts you back in the game. Result.



- Impressive visuals.
- Main single-player mode has been vastly improved.



- Can get repetitive.
- Nothing that hasn't been seen before elsewhere.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Def Jam Vendetta
Electronic Arts
NGC/82 87%
No Create-A-Wrestler mode but otherwise this is terrific grappling fun.





9 VISUALS

Superb graphics with impressive character models and arenas.



6 SOUNDS

Let down by the noticable lack of voice acting.



8 MASTERY

Movements are slick plus the camera is well implemented.



7 LIFESPAN

Decent Story mode, but a limited range of speciality matches.

VERDICT

A big improvement over *WrestleMania XIX*. But its ambitions are so limited that it comes across as *WWE Smackdown Lite*.

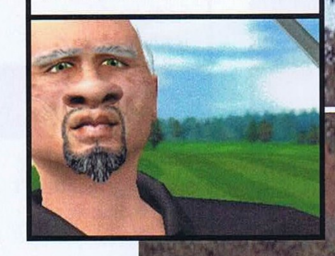


74

"The new benchmark in golf sims"



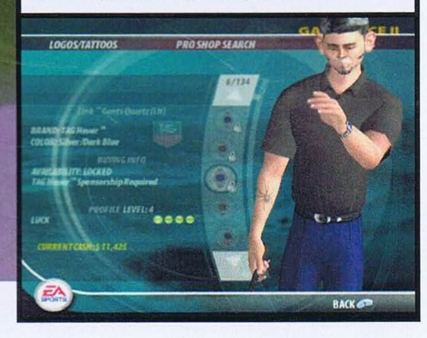
FACEACHE
EA reckon you can recreate any face with 95% accuracy. After failing to make a realistic version of former editor Jes Bickham, we're not so sure.





TIGER PROOF
If you're getting stupidly low scores, Tiger-proof the course by shrinking the greens and raising the difficulty. You can make patterns in the grass.

FASHION
Everything can be customised, down to the type of watch your player wears. This one goes particularly well with pink trousers and a paisley shirt.

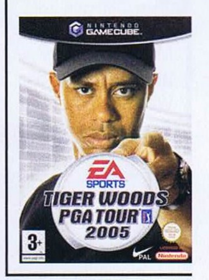


TOUR MODE
Playing in PGA Tour mode stops you doing impossible things like spinning the ball out of a bunker, and will add around ten shots to your score.



INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	EA
RELEASE DATE	24TH SEPT
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	51
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

Annual update? This one's called 2005 because that's how many hours it'll take you to finish it.



Last year we complained that *Tiger Woods 2004* was basically just *2003* on steroids. This year it's so big, most players with full-time jobs and social lives will never see more than half of it.

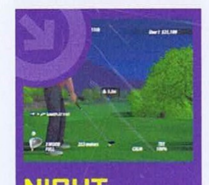
> **"PLAYERS WITH JOBS AND SOCIAL LIVES WILL NEVER SEE MORE THAN HALF OF IT"**

You almost need a map to find your way through the menu options.

But the game has made some impressive developments in aspects other than mere size. Expert players will find they have more control over the ball, while there are playing aids and simpler game modes for novices. And the amount of customisation you can do means there are actually some good reasons for owners of the previous versions to consider making the update.

If you can shoot your way around the 2003/2004 courses in under 50 strokes, the new Tiger-proofing mode lets you narrow the fairways, deepen the bunkers and roughen the, erm, rough. It makes things a lot less forgiving. You can put together a super course of your favourite 18 holes, all Tiger-proofed to the max, and as your reputation grows in the new, much harder PGA Tour mode, revered golfers such as Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Greg Norman will turn up to challenge you to a round.

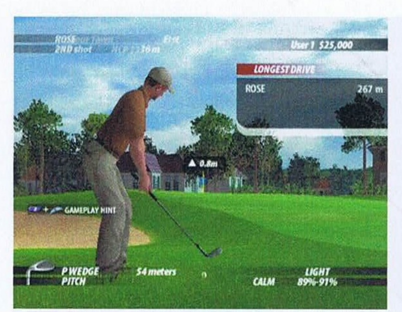
Create your own player, complete with custom-designed swing and a face modelled via screen after screen of sliders, and you can compete in events ranging from basic tournaments to challenges based on the playing styles of some of the biggest names in golf. Or, if you prefer, you can spend 10 minutes hitting balls off the top of a skyscraper. There are 14 courses in total, two of which are locked from the start,



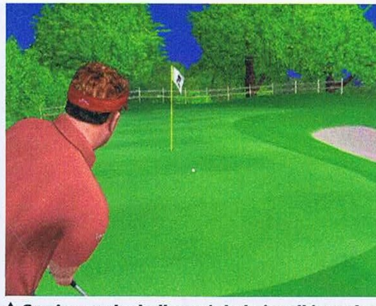
NIGHT GOLFING
You can specify a tee-off time, and the conditions will alter to reflect the changing light as you play. Midnight golf in a thunder storm? It's the only way to play. Of course, in the game you don't get a whacking great purple arrow over your player's head. Edwaaards! (slap!)

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

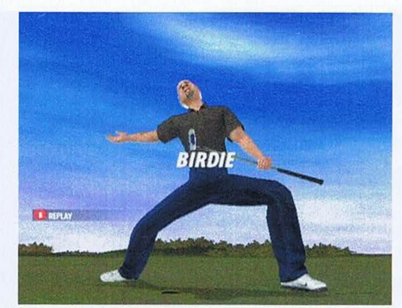
The sprawling golf sim with something for everyone



△ Up a bit, left a bit, line it up and… Whack! Straight through the living room window.



△ Staring at the ball won't help it roll into the hole. Damn those pesky laws of physics.



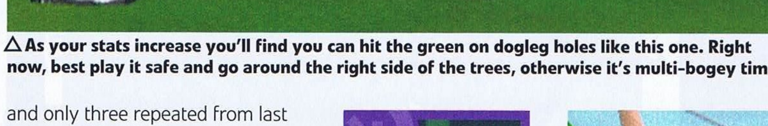
△ The US Ryder Cup team practices some gentlemanly new celebration routines.



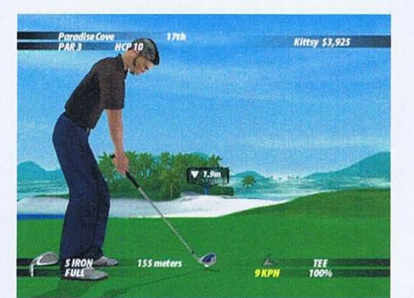
HELP!

Game Face II mode is almost too big to comprehend. Design a swing, buy clothes, apply different colour lip gloss to upper and lower lips… Everything a golf superstar could possibly want.

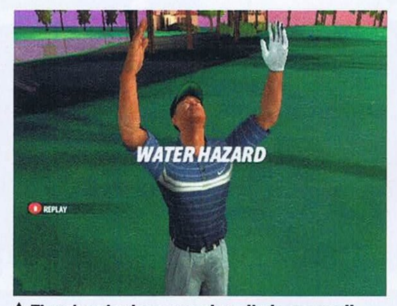




△ As your stats increase you'll find you can hit the green on dogleg holes like this one. Right now, best play it safe and go around the right side of the trees, otherwise it's multi-bogey time.



△ This course has tiny patches of grass set around sand dunes and water. It's lethal.



△ Tiger's rain dance works a little too well. Back to the training ground, Woodsy.

and only three repeated from last year's edition.

Using the analogue stick to swing the club adds an arcade-style feel that's enhanced by the inclusion of the mystical Tiger Vision putting aid and a range of over-the-top celebration animations – all of which can be turned off or toned down if you prefer a more serious game.

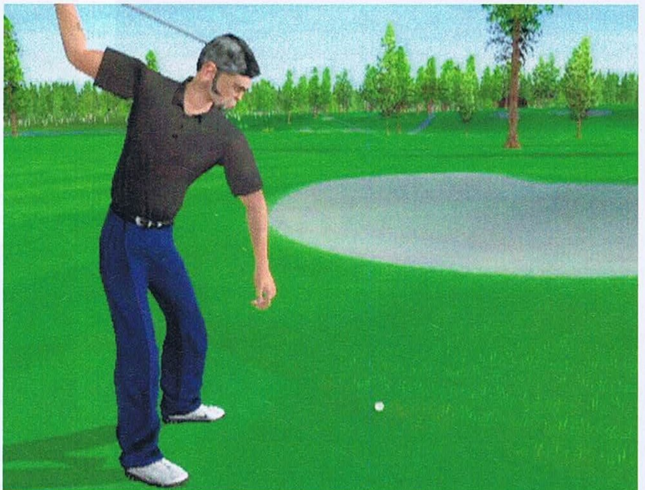
We're still not convinced by the putting, which tells you where to place a cursor rather than trusting the traditional 3D grid and your instincts. And the way the camera view blurs up and zooms out, when all you want is a quick look around the course, is as irritating as ever. But as a whole, this is the new benchmark in golf sims.

MARTIN KITTS



TIGER VISION

When you need to sink a crucial putt, turn on Tiger Vision and you get shown exactly where to aim. Move the cursor over the Tiger marker before the time limit expires. Speed and precision are called for, and you can only use it three times per round.



△ He isn't taking a petulant whack at the ball – this is his one-handed swing.



- Custom options.
- Golf 'legends'.
- PGA mode for expert players.



- Unlockables require weeks of play.
- Still needs a proper 'exploration' camera.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Mario Golf Toadstool Tour
Nintendo
NGC/95 85%
Super cute, relatively simple fantasy golf.





7 VISUALS

Slick presentation and smooth, realistic courses.

7 SOUNDS

Turn down the music, listen to the commentary.



8 MASTERY

It's pretty close to being the definitive golf game.



9 LIFESPAN

New events will pop up on the calendar for the next year.

VERDICT

The biggest, most varied, most refined golf game ever. Of course, next year's version will be better…



"They killed his parents and then they burn his village"

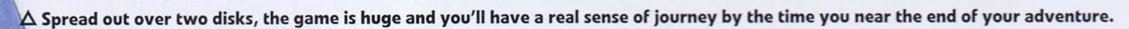


INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NAMCO
DEVELOPER	NAMCO
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	NO
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40







△ Spread out over two disks, the game is huge and you'll have a real sense of journey by the time you near the end of your adventure.





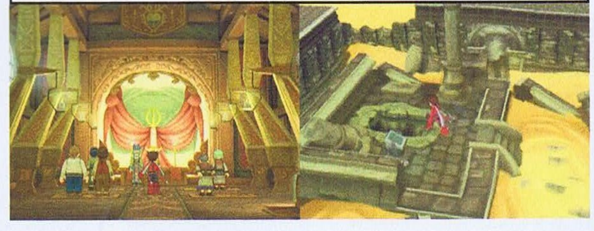


△ The battles can get pretty colourful thanks to the dazzling special effects.



A MIXED BAG

For every brilliant touch – there's something irritating flung in to muddy the waters. The character design is superb, for example, as is the artwork for the towns – but often this is spolied by dull puzzles and poor pacing.





STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Most of your adventure involves escorting the Chosen to sacred seals around the world. At each seal you must defeat the guardian boss, then the Chosen takes a step closer to turning into an angel.






Δ Expheres let you tailor characters' abilities and Strength/Techniques alignment.


Δ At the start, travel is slow, but you'll soon find more efficient ways to get around.

TALES OF SYMPHONIA

Compose yourself, stat-fan, and prepare to fight! Namco have managed to orchestrate an RPG of real quality…



The feeling of déjà vu is inevitable. Lloyd, *Tales of Symphonia's* hero, is day-dreaming at the back of his classroom in the game's opening sequence. The teacher is discussing the history of the world and he's not paying attention. He's a bit of a rogue, see – naïve, with a cheeky attitude, but also (you've guessed it!) a likeable bloke with a heart of gold. How original.

His home village is just as you'd expect too. A humble little place, populated by kind, simple folk, but, as destiny would have it, it holds the key to the salvation of the world. You see, one of Lloyd's classmates is 'The Chosen' – an individual destined to climb a giant tower to awaken a sleeping goddess who will regenerate the world – banishing all the rotten people into oblivion. The past 'Chosen' failed in their attempt to banish the world's evils and as a result the people are living in fear of the Desians – a bunch of bullies who are enslaving humans in 'ranches', making them push rocks around, turning them into mutants and… you get the picture. So when (shock horror) Lloyd discovers they killed his parents and then they burn his village down it all gets a bit personal – sparking the ubiquitous 'go-on-a-long-journey-and-save-the-world' adventure utilising the same tried-and-tested character types of magic users, mercenaries, headstrong teenagers and a sweet and innocent heroine.



MULTI-PLAYER

You and up to three mates can take part in the battles by just plugging in extra controllers. Unfortunately this doesn't work as well as we'd have liked because the camera always focuses on Lloyd, leaving other characters outside the frame of the action.

> **"THE NEAR-TOTAL LACK OF 'SURPRISING' ELEMENTS DOESN'T REALLY BOTHER US"**

TALES OF THE EXPECTED

To be fair, the near-total lack of 'surprising' elements doesn't really bother us. We're hardly spoilt for choice when it comes to 'traditional'

"The dialogue is absolutely appalling at times"

BATTLE STATIONS

Symphonia's real-time battle system is the jewel in its crown...



You only have direct control over the main character. You can move left and right along a plane aligned with a targeted enemy. Hitting A along with directions on the analogue lets off attacks.



You can string attacks together to form combos. Special attacks (using B) can be magical or physical depending on whether your characters are aligned to Techniques or Strength.



You don't have direct control of your team mates, but you can pause the game to issue orders. Even if your character falls, you can still influence the others by customising their attack patterns.



Blocking attacks and counter-attacking, or co-ordinating attacks with other team members will raise the number of hits that form a combo. High combos mean more experience at the end.

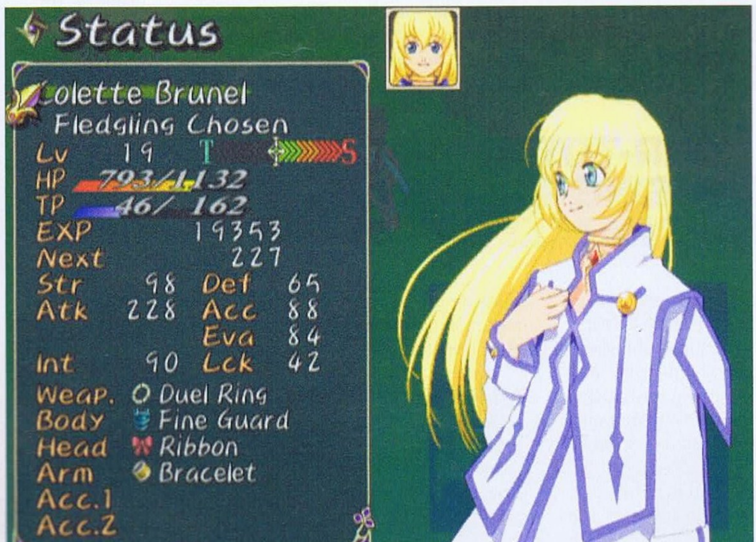


Your combos fill up a meter that lets you perform unison attacks. These form a powerful barrage of magic and physical attacks causing huge damage. Mastering these is the key to victory.





△ If you look at Sheena on the left there, she's a touch out of focus – a weird phenomenon that happens all too often.



△ Anyone familiar with RPGs will feel right at home with the way the customisation works.

Japanese RPGs and so it's nice to slip into something comfortable and slow-burning like this – and for all its clichés, we've grown fond of it.

The most striking aspect is the way it looks – it's very easy on the eye. Okay, so there are a few graphical blemishes to endure. In particular, there are strange focusing problems in some of the cut-scenes, which tends to make things look a little blurred on occasion – particularly in the foreground or background. The game's over-world map hasn't had as much attention lavished on it as we'd have liked either, but as it's perfectly functional and not the main focus of most of the game, it's something that you'll be willing to put up with – especially when you take into account the rest of the game's presentation.

"THE GAME'S LOCATIONS ARE SUPERBLY DRAWN AND ARE NEVER TOO GAUDY"

There's no denying that the game's locations are superbly drawn and are never too gaudy or lavish. The artwork is delicately

TALES OF SYMPHONIA

Bittersweet Symphonia…

YOUR TEAM

You can only have four characters on the battlefield at any time. In single-player, you only control the main character, Lloyd, but you can influence the others via a handy pause menu.

YOUR ORDERS

You can set your team to act in certain ways, telling them to attack all out, take on specific targets, use magic and so on. You can also set specific actions whenever you need them, like using healing items.

ENEMIES

EXP-fodder like bugs, fish and er… mushrooms, awaits alongside some impressive bosses. The battles get tough later – you'll need to be quick to tweak characters not directly under your control.

UNISON METER

This fills up as you pull off combos. When it's full you can activate a unison attack. You've then got a few seconds to input commands for your characters' special attacks.



△ **These guys are impostors.**



△ **The Desians are a nasty bunch.**



△ **A Gamecube! In a dungeon!**



△ **A quick game of Simon Says.**

done, always complements the cel-shaded characters and has plenty of variety. From the shire-like grassy glades of your home region, through deserts, underground passes and quaint little towns, every location is memorable and there's a definite sense of distance and journey, which, we suppose, is one of the most important factors in any successful RPG. Well, that, and the battle system…

This really is the make or break aspect as it's one of the main activities in the game. Thankfully, it's the most unique thing about *Tales* (see the box above for the specifics) and it works well enough to keep battles from feeling too tedious when you're power-levelling hour after hour. Battles aren't random, either; you can see potential encounters roaming the environments and so can avoid them if you so wish.

So the most important aspects of the game have been handled extremely well – and the basic RPG foundations, particularly where intensive character customisation and development are concerned, offer a great deal of depth. Unfortunately there are a few factors that prevent it from reaching true greatness. Despite it being one reason why we warmed to it, the fact that it's all so goofy, so sugary and so twee makes it very hard to take it seriously. There are times when it's downright silly and this does prevent you from becoming *totally* absorbed in it.

The dialogue is absolutely appalling at times and the voice acting doesn't do it any favours – with much of the spoken dialogue feeling somewhat detached from the characters. Okay, so it's (unintentionally) funny at times – but we can't help wishing that the production values were a little tighter in this department. Many of the game's tasks are rather cynical in the way they draw the length of the game out – requiring you to travel huge distances and then back again in order to progress. Likewise, the sheer difficulty of some sections, requiring hours of power-levelling, stop the experience from flowing as well as we'd have liked. These issues don't *ruin* the game, but they certainly stop it from being the classic we were hoping it would turn out to be.

GERAINT EVANS



MASTER CHEF

After every battle you get the chance to cook certain items. You can collect hundreds of ingredients – but you'll need to learn the recipes from 'Wonder Chef', who's hidden in various places around the world. Each dish has various properties from healing to strength boosts.



- Sweet artwork.
- 70-80 hrs of gaming.
- It's a decent RPG!



- Clichés aplenty.
- Poor voices.
- Ugly over-world.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Skies of Arcadia Legends
Sega
NGC/81 90%
Another vast RPG with a similarly unimaginative plot.





An exasperating mixture of the ugly and the divine.

6 SOUNDS

Irritating voices and the usual lilting RPG tunes.



The excellent battle system really saves the day here.



It's absolutely huge. You may even want to play it again.

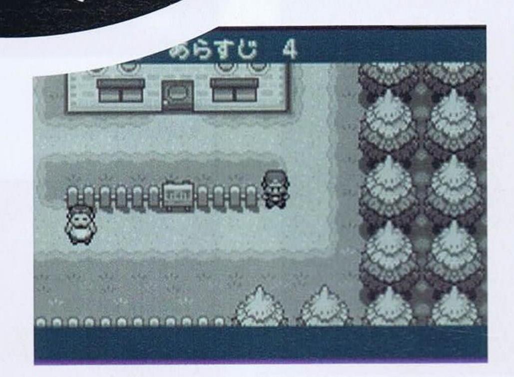
VERDICT

If you've been looking for a huge, absorbing Japanese RPG for your Gamecube then you'll find it right here.

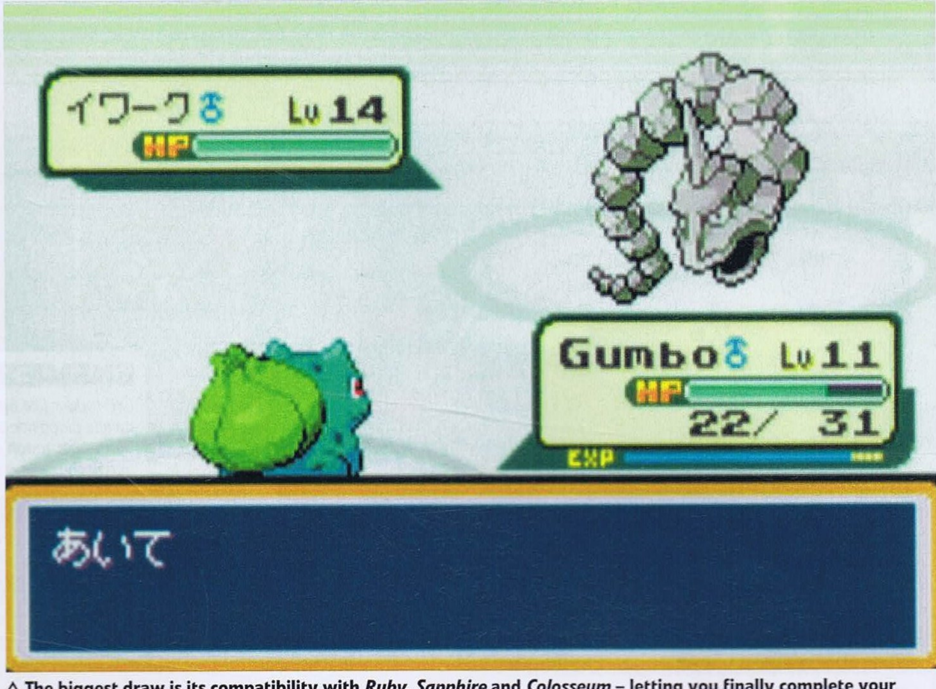


DÉJÀ VU

The whole Pokémon series gets brought up to date with this tweak of one of the older titles in the globe-conquering franchise. You have to wonder what future the 'Mon have – will they be (eventually) put out to pasture, or minced up and papped into tins of catfood? Figuratively speaking, of course...







△ The biggest draw is its compatibility with *Ruby*, *Sapphire* and *Colosseum* – letting you finally complete your collection. Gumbo here is so excited, his little green back sack started leaking over his ugly frog-like body.

POKÉMON FIRE RED & LEAF GREEN

Nintendo really know how to milk a franchise – this time they're taking you back to where it all began...



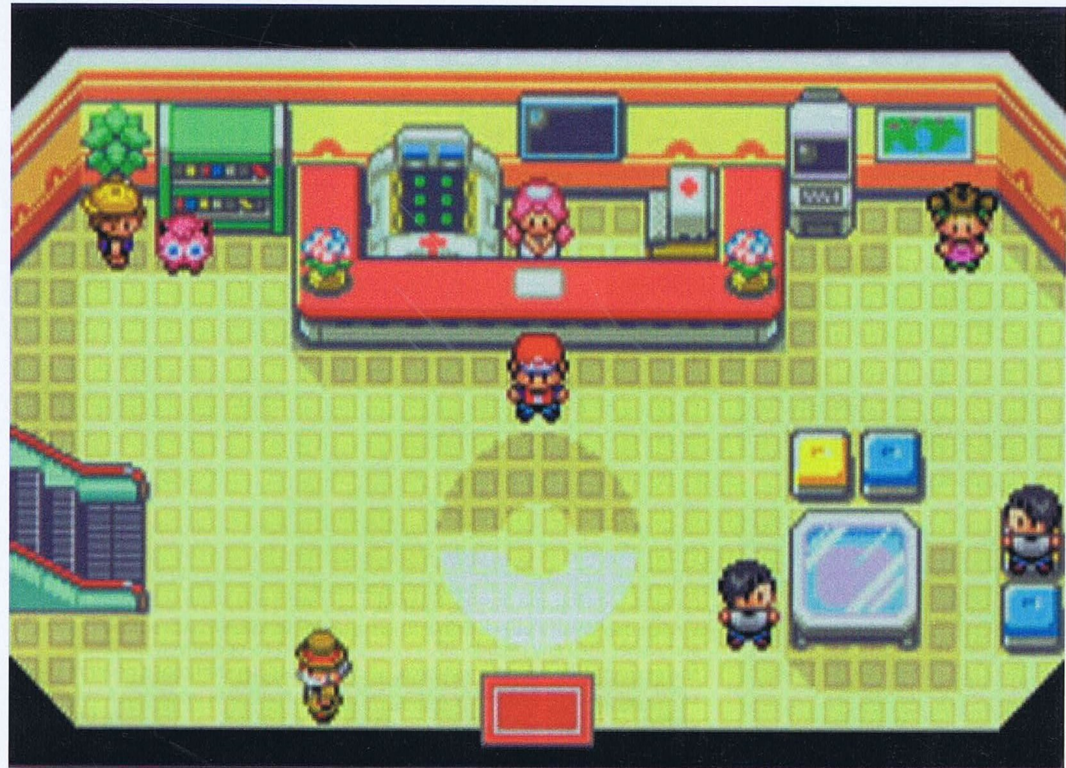
You're probably wondering why the hell we've got Japanese screenshots for the UK review of the latest Pokémon game. Well, unfortunately, the review code we received from Nintendo came in a GBA SP surrounded by what can only be described as an iron chastity belt. They were probably a bit worried we might spill coffee on their precious cartridge or cover it in Marmite or something. Which is a bit unfair really. We haven't done that in... ooooh... months. And it also means we can't grab images directly off the cartridge. Anyway, as proof that we have played it we've taken a photo of the SP in question – complete with its armoured hull – which, if you ask us, is still far more attractive than the 'hip' tribal model they've been pimping with ads full of half-naked men.

> **"REMAKES OF THE ORIGINAL RED AND GREEN, WHICH CAME OUT OVER HERE AS RED AND BLUE"**

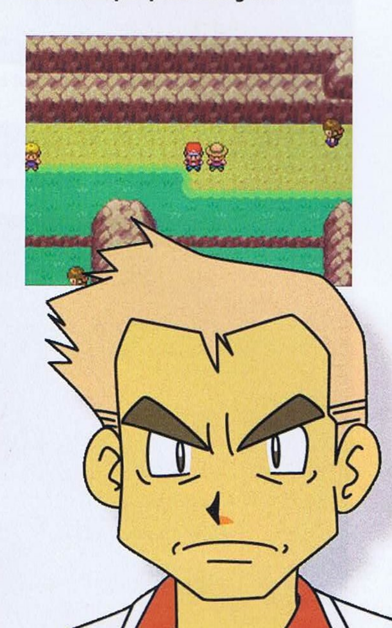
So, er, *Pokémon Fire Red* and *Leaf Green*, then. If you didn't know, they're remakes of the original *Pokémon Red* and *Green*, which came out over here as *Pokémon Red* and *Blue* respectively. Now we're not going to bore you with a long-winded explanation of what the games are about. There's no point as, like millions of other Nintendo gamers out there, you've probably played the originals to destruction. So it's only really worth pointing out any significant extras and differences – not that there are many.

EVOLUTION

On the face of it, these are nearly identical to their Game Boy predecessors, apart for the fact that visually, they've been revamped and pulled into line with the GBA's *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire*. The dialogue, the starting Pokémon, the towns, everything is the same. Pretty much. There are a number of tweaks worth noting. First, you now have the


The Pokécenter now has a special wireless link-up booth, but the plot events and characters remain the same inside.


This is the SP that Nintendo sent us, with a tamper-proof iron girdle.




The whole business with your rival and the starting Pokémon remains the same, but the Pokédex Professor Oak gives you has been revamped with extra features.




Just as before, you have to battle through each gym to earn badges.

option to play as a girl or a boy, just as you have in every Pokémon game since *Yellow*, and there are genders for all the Pokémon, allowing for breeding – something that wasn't possible until *Gold* and *Silver*. The Pokédex has also been overhauled, offering more information and abilities as well as Training, and the games' Hidden Machines have been altered slightly, again bringing the games into line with *Ruby* and *Sapphire*.

Little tweaks and updates, then, really. When you start your adventure you'll be hard pushed to see any significant changes at all. The dialogue is, almost word for word, exactly how it was before – and we'd be lying if we didn't admit we felt the warming tingle of nostalgia sweep over us. It has been, after all, almost six years ago that we first sampled the English language versions of *Red* and *Blue*, and any game that you've invested countless hours in will hold a special place in your heart. But that said, we can't help feeling that this is update is a little on the cheap side.

In fairness, there is one major addition to the game. After beating the Cinnabar Gym, you're whisked off to a series of all-new islands. While they're not particularly big they're populated by the wild Johto Pokémon from *Gold* and *Silver*, giving you the opportunity to complete your collection for trade between *Colosseum* and *Ruby* and *Sapphire*. Then, of course, there's the free wireless adaptor - that lets you link GBAs together without a cable.

POKÉPUZZLE

So the question remains, should you buy them? Well, the quality of the game remains intact. For the hardened Pokémon enthusiast, then yes, it's well worth it, and even if you played the originals to death, it's likely that you'll get plenty of enjoyment reliving your memories. And if by some slim chance the original games passed you by the first time, then this as an essential a purchase as it's always been.




INFO BURST

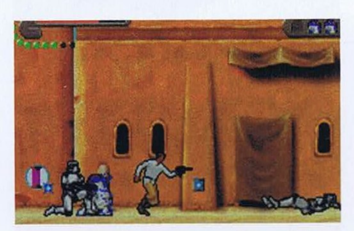
FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	1ST OCTOBER
COST	£30



DID YOU KNOW? The wireless adaptor that come free with *Red* and *Green* can't be used with any old multiplayer games. They have to be specifically programmed for – games like *Mario Golf Advance* and the forthcoming *F-Zero Climax* being two examples.

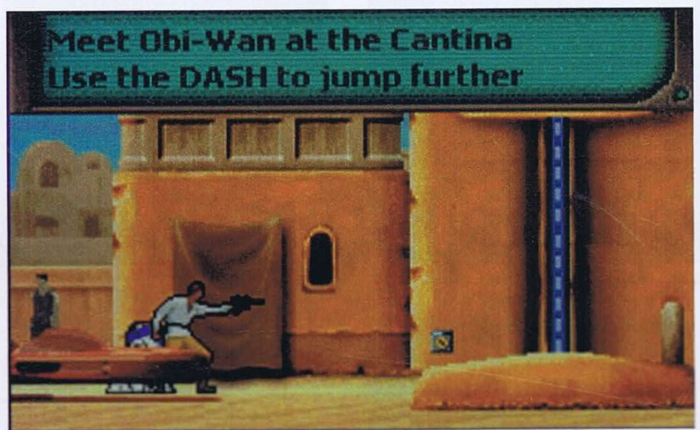
STAR WARS TRILOGY APPRENTICE OF THE FORCE

More golden childhood memories trampled into bits.





△ Later levels get more exciting with the addition of Force Powers. A little.



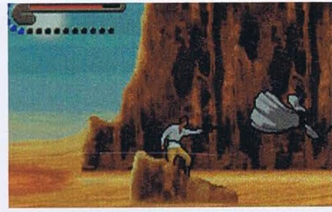
△ Because Star Wars was always all about running and jumping over holes. Tsk.

Presumably released to coincide with the original trilogy appearing on DVD for the first time, *Apprentice of the Force* is yet another half-baked Star Wars title that doesn't do its subject matter justice. And do we really need yet another one of those?

But it tries hard. In a concerted bid to get by on any goodwill generated by memories of *Super Star Wars* on the SNES, *Apprentice of the Force* offers a superficially similar blend of running, jumping and driving, although the driving here is of the top-down sort rather than any pseudo-3D shenanigans. The variety's welcome, but the sad fact of the matter is that the game is so shoddily designed it's rarely more than a trial by frustration.

The platformy bits are repetitive and dull, seeing you for the most part running along, jumping over barrels and shooting stormtroopers, with regular breaks for battles where you're confined to a single screen, instances that are brain-numbingly dull in their simplicity and lack of excitement. It's really quite workmanlike, and even when you factor in the acquisition of some (admittedly entertaining) Force powers and some potentially fine multiplayer action (two people can go at it co-operatively and there's competitive stuff too) it never really rises above the mediocre. A shame.

JES BICKHAM



△ Sand People – nasty little buggers.



△ You can climb up walls, just like Luke!



DUEL MASTERS SEMPAI LEGENDS

Another card game money-pit. Get saving those pennies, kids!

Duel Masters is the latest card game-turned-cartoon to be get the GBA treatment and, to be frank, it's probably exactly what you're expecting. This isn't as unfriendly as Yu-Gi-Oh!, though, thanks partly to a carefully worded tutorial, but also because the rules of the game are clearer.

If you've ever played Magic: The Gathering you'll be at home here, as *Duel Masters* is basically a stripped-down version of that. It's all about summoning monsters, 'paying' for them using the correct-colour resources and nobbling your enemy's monsters and getting rid of the five 'shield' cards that protect him. It's simple, but naturally there's huge depth as far as deck design is concerned. And the whole thing is wrapped up a in a very basic RPG package.

A fairly decent start for a pocket money-devouring franchise, then.

JES BICKHAM



△ Rather play this than *Mario Golf*?



△ No, we didn't think so. It's boring.





△ Sheesh. Ain't that always the way?



△ Whatever you say, moody teenager.

YU-GI-OH! RESHEF OF DESTRUCTION

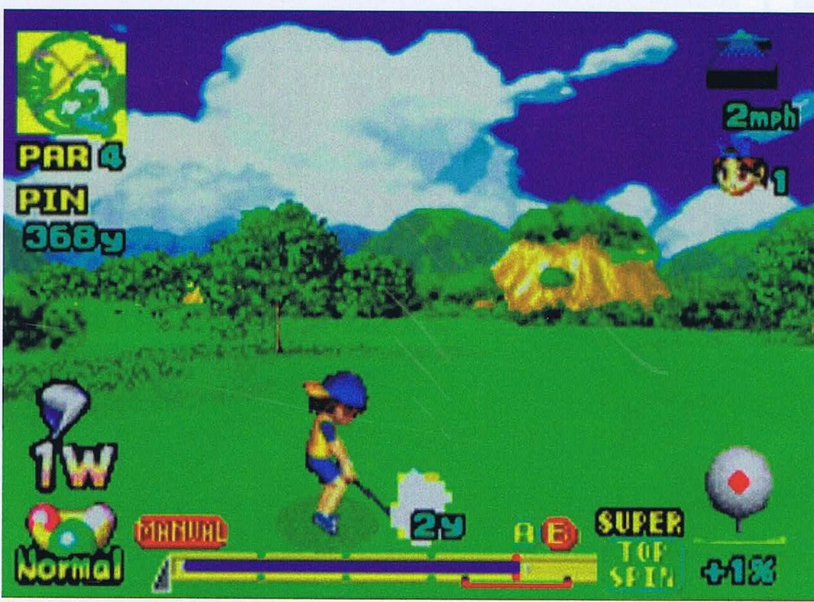
In a dark corner of gaming hell, you'll be playing this for eternity.

If you've never played a Yu-Gi-Oh! game before, then starting with this will most likely see you clawing your own eyes out in frustration. It drops you right in at the deep end with no explanations. It is the very essence of unfriendly. It is, in short, *evil*.

However, dyed-in-the-wool Yu-Gi-Oh! fanatics won't have it any easier. This is the most annoying Yu-Gi-Oh! yet. There's still enormous scope as far as designing your deck is concerned, and the strategies are vast, but *Reshef of Destruction* is irrevocably tainted by too-hard enemies and ridiculously expensive cards, meaning you've got to slog your way through loads of petty little battles to be able to afford not very much at all. This is a long, hard, difficult slog and is for die-hards – and masochists – only.

JES BICKHAM





△ Lining up a huge drive on this picturesque par four. Until you've earned enough points to give your character the skills needed to hit the green in one shot, you'll never get great scores.



△ Visit the training area to learn crucial tips from the experts.



△ Lining up a huge etc, etc, etc...

MARIO GOLF ADVANCE TOUR

Golf sim meets RPG, with barely a plumber in sight.


Being the undisputed king of console golf (sorry, Tiger) you'd think that all Mario has to do to crush his foolish rivals is turn up. As soon as the fat bloke with the tash steps up to the tee, it's Game Over.

So confident of success is our Mazza, this time he doesn't even bother to lace up his spiked brogues or whip the fluffy cover off his big dog. It might be called *Mario Golf*, but the man's biggest role here is as the star of the box art.

Instead you play an anonymous, and initially talentless, aspiring golf student. You hack your way around the practice greens, taking advice from grizzled old pros, and earn experience points by entering tournaments or completing challenges. Eventually you'll have created a customised golf beast capable of launching the ball into earth orbit via one mighty twitch of its upgraded whacking arm.

This quirky golf RPG works in almost exactly the same way as the old Game Boy version, right down to the placement of characters and locations. Out on the golf course, though, it's significantly upgraded. The controls mirror those of its Gamecube big brother and the fairways include new features, such as switches that activate shortcuts and the like.

GBA's graphical power allows for a semi-3D overhead view and richly coloured backgrounds, plus you can link it to the Gamecube edition to exchange characters and unlock bonuses. It can be hard to judge how the ball is going to behave on the greens, since slopes are represented by crude arrows rather than proper geometry, but it's still undoubtedly the best handheld golf game you can buy today.

> "THE FAIRWAYS INCLUDE NEW FEATURES, SUCH AS SWITCHES THAT ACTIVATE SHORTCUTS"

There's a multiplayer mode where you can pass the GBA between players or link up to four machines (so long as everyone owns a cartridge, that is), but the engrossing RPG features make it best suited to solo play. And, taking it as a solo game, this portable *Mario Golf* is fractionally more challenging and long-lasting than it is on Gamecube.

MARTIN KITTS


INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	SEPT 17
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **87**

FIVE FOR A PRIZE!

Over the next few pages, you'll see a selection of Top Fives – games hand-picked by us which we recommend anyone new to Nintendo Gamecube gets involved with. Now we want yours. They can be any regular category of game, or something a little different (your five favourite multiplayer games, five games with brilliant endings etc). Send us your Top Five list and earn yourself a priceless (or, more likely, worthless) prize!

NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST 'CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY…

TOP FIVE FELINE STARS

It's a fabulous furry freak show on Gamecube…



CATWOMAN
She's sleek and slinky – but her game stinks of kippers.



TOM
Me-Yowza! One cool cat.



SYLVESTER
He's 59 now and should be pensioned off. Or culled.



SPITZ
Why the flying helmet?



BLACK CAT
Feline groovy.







1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER — 97

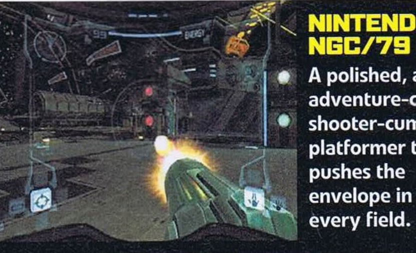


NINTENDO ■ NGC/81

The babbling of the internet whingers faded to a stunned silence when this hit the shelves. It's as exquisitely fashioned as a Disney feature film, and doesn't lose any of the gameplay for it. Some sailing sections spoil it a bit, and it's pretty short, but this is as close to 'art' as 'games' have been yet.



2 METROID PRIME — 97



NINTENDO NGC/79

A polished, addictive adventure-cum-shooter-cum-platformer that pushes the envelope in every field.



3 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE — 96



NINTENDO NGC/73

Mazza's cleaning up a tropical island. With the polished visuals and sense of fun of *Mario 64*, this hits the right buttons.

4 MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!! — 93



NINTENDO NGC/88

The best *Mario Kart* ever – and the best multiplayer title on GC. More characters, special weapons and crazy tracks.



5 F-ZERO GX — 93



NINTENDO NGC/85

Speed, challenge and stunningly designed tracks blended to form the finest of arcade racing experiences. It really is fast.



6 SOUL CALIBUR 2 — 92

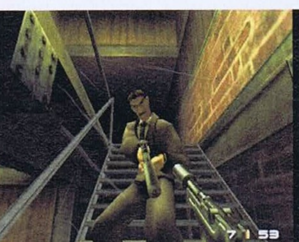


NAMCO NGC/85

The best fighting game on *any* system, offering rich depths to those who go looking. And you can go nuts with Link.



7 TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 92



EIDOS ■ NGC/73

A stonker of a time-travelling FPS, *TimeSplitters 2* crept out of nowhere to become GC's finest example of the genre.



8 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE — 91





NINTENDO NGC/68

An eye-singeing multiplayer and cameos from just about every Nintendo character make this ace.



9 HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE — 91





UBI SOFT NGC/91

Utterly charming farm sim. Sounds unremarkable, but it'll have you addicted in no time. Wonderful.

10 HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN — 91





EIDOS ■ NGC/82

Tighten the fibre-wire and leave your morals at the door as Mr 47's elimination sim comes to GC. Stealthy, free-form gaming at its finest.

11 PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME — 91



UBI SOFT NGC/90

Cunning puzzles and excellent levels make this a classic 3D platformer. It absolutely *reeks* of quality.

12 WAVE RACE BLUE STORM — 91





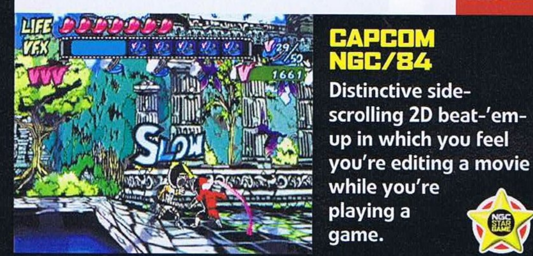
NINTENDO NGC/67

Slight frame-rate problems in PAL, but *Blue Storm* is still a fabulous racer with *the* most incredible water effects.

13 VIEWTIFUL JOE — 90







CAPCOM NGC/84

Distinctive side-scrolling 2D beat-'em-up in which you feel you're editing a movie while you're playing a game.

14 SECOND SIGHT — 90





CODEMASTERS NGC/97

Beautifully done action and stealth combine with a superb story to make a real star game. Don't miss out on this one!

15 METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES — 90







KONAMI NGC/91

This game's an old one, but the updated graphics and gameplay make the Snake snuff-fest a Gamecube essential.

16 BURNOUT 2 — 90





ACCLAIM NGC/80

B2 takes the best bits of the first game – speed and collisions – and welds them onto more modes than you can eat.

17 WARIO WARE INC. MEGA PARTY GAME$ — 90





NINTENDO NGC/97

Quirky original party game where players are hit with a barrage of three-second minigames. Addictive foolery.

18 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE — 90





ATARI ■ NGC/78

Essentially *Gauntlet* with lots of numbers and menu screens, online *PSO* becomes an epic tale of crate-smashing and item collection.

19 1080° AVALANCHE — 90



NINTENDO NGC/89

Fewer tricks involved than in *SSX3* – more of a snowboard racer than an extreme sports title. You'll grow to love it.

20 WORMS 3D — 90



SEGA ■ NGC/87

Turn-based strategy, but loopier than a tin of spaghetti hoops. The worms go 3D – all you need for fun is three homicidal friends.

TOP TEN GBA GAMES



1 ADVANCE WARS 1 & 2
Cute-looking turn-based strategy, with a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging core. Honestly, it's better than it sounds. *AW2* is essentially *Advance Wars 1.5*, but it's tweaked to perfection.

2 WARIO WARE
Imagine the simple graphics and gameplay of Game & Watch fired at you in five-second bursts. Loopy fun that you'll keep returning to.

3 MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA
An RPG with puzzle and platform elements starring our two top plumbers.



4 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
One of the most memorable outings for Link (alongside *Ocarina of Time*). Comes with bonus *Four Swords* multiplayer adventure.

5 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
This tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever.

6 POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE
The same structure as before – catch 'em all, send 'em into battle – but still the most entertaining RPG out there…

7 MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
Nicks the best bits from the SNES and N64 versions, and if you've got four friends, GBAs and cables, they can play too.

8 METROID FUSION ZERO MISSION
Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found in these two games. A sprawling environment littered with enemies and an imposing difficulty level.

9 HARVEST MOON
A slow burner, *HM: Friends of Mineral Town* is a farming/charming sim to die for. It'll last you months.

10 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player.

NGC DIRECTORY

Your at-a-glance guide to every other PAL title on Gamecube.

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Title, score, publisher and where to find the review.

DOGENDS OF WRESTLING 22

OILYSOFT ■ NGC/53

Chain-smoking, bikini-clad Dot Cotton takes on oily, cigar-chomping Boss Hogg in the worst sports sim ever.

A brief outline of what to expect and whether you should consider it...

18 WHEELER PRO AMERICAN TRUCKER 48

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/68

Drive your truck and avoid 'smokey'. The arcade version with the sit-in cabinet was better.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP 30

EA ■ NGC/69

As much fun as being told your parents have been killed in a car crash and then contracting Weil's Disease.

ACE GOLF 74

EIDOS ■ NGC/74

A highly enjoyable, relaxing sticksie-ball game that treads the middle-ground between fun and serious.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE 81

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72

Hawk's alterno-clone – you skate around massive arenas, 'busting' tricks on a pair of 'roller-boots'.

ASTERIX AND OBELIX XXL 32

ATARI ■ NGC/95

Bollix! A complete waste of your, and the developers', time and money. Run, jump, collect – YAWN!

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2 70

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/77

Wave Race on land with farming utility vehicles. Competent, but there's superior racing fare out there.

BALDUR'S GATE DARK ALLIANCE 80

VIVENDI ■ NGC/81

Dungeon-slashing adventurising with fewer numbers and a special two-player flavour. Actually quite good.

BARBARIAN 70

VIRGIN ■ NGC/72

A button-mashing fantasy battler complete with fully-smashable arenas. Fun, but not as good as *Smash Bros.*

BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW 15

KEMCO ■ NGC/81

For ages, Gamecube's most arse-clenchingly bad title. Clunky, dull, gameplay-free superheroics.

BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU 45

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88

Repeated bashing that would've been great 15 years ago. It's okay, but only just. Batman deserves better.

BATMAN VENGEANCE 70

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67

Cel-shaded platforming cartoon bat-action. One of the first Cube games – it's looking pretty ropy already.

BEACH SPIKERS 79

ATARI ■ NGC/72

Volleyball on sand. Addictive with four players, but the single-player's longevity lets the side down.

BEYBLADE: SUPER TOURNAMENT BATTLE 10

ATARI ■ NGC/88

For £40, we'll come and cheesegrater your eyes. It's more fun and lasts longer than this spinning top sim.

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL 86

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/90

Beautifully realised adventure in which heroine Jade has to keep track of wildlife under alien attack.

BIG AIR FREESTYLE 28

ATARI ■ NGC/75

Another awful off-road bike title, the kind that makes you want to cry the second you've started playing.

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 71

EMPIRE ■ NGC/83

A cross between *Elite* and Smokey and The Bandit, but with The Reynolds replaced by wall-eyed hillbillies.

BILLY HATCHER & THE GIANT EGG 86

SEGA ■ NGC/87

Rescue the Chicken Elders by rolling an egg around and smacking bad guys with it. Hatch it while you can!

BIONICLE 29

EA ■ NGC/87

Diabionicle, more like. Tedious and fiddly with a duff camera and no incentive to keep playing.

BLACK & BRUISED 66

MAJESCO ■ NGC/81

Looks great and you've 19 boxer careers to play through, but the sound's rotten and it lacks depth.

BLOOD OMEN 2 LEGACY OF KAIN 72

EIDOS ■ NGC/77

Gamecube's other undead hack-fest. After 1,000 years of slumber, evil vampire Kain is awake and hungry.

BLOOD RAYNE 65

VIVENDI ■ NGC/79

Vampire fun. Dismember Nazis, fire period weaponry, and battle an *evil priest* driving an *armoured pulpit.*

BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY 74

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68

Competent morphing-into-animals fighting antics, but *Capcom vs SNK* and *Mortal Kombat* have surpassed it.

TOP FIVE PLATFORM GAMES



SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
A tour-de-force of everything good gaming should be.

PRINCE OF PERSIA
An innovative time-rewinding twist and excellent puzzles make this essential.

LUIGI'S MANSION
Yes, it's a little easy, but you'll enjoy every second.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC
Can't touch *Sunshine*, but it's entertaining and looks 'the bomb'.

WARIO WORLD
Not that tough to beat, admittedly, but still bags of fun.

TOP FIVE RACING GAMES



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
Single-player mode looks as cute as ever, but it's rock hard.

F-ZERO GX
Expertly crafted arcade fun. Really rockets along.

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM
Classic Nintendo action with dazzling water effects.

BURNOUT 2
Fast car racing combined with steel-crunching crashes.

EXTREME G 3
The weapons are what make this future racer shine.

BMX XXX 48

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76

Childish, boring BMX game featuring strippers showing you their nipples. Get a girlfriend instead.

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS 70

VIVENDI ■ NGC/76

Yet another update of the arson franchise. Single-player is tedious; four-player is addictive as ever.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER CHAOS BLEEDS 70

VIVENDI ■ NGC/86

Lacking in essential Buffiness, and not just because the Gellar girl didn't voice it. Good, but not great.

BURNOUT 86

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

With spectacular crashes and perfect handling, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO 79

CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

A great game, but purist retro freaks will want to fork out for a clunky arcade stick to get the most from it...

CARMEN SANDIEGO: SECRET OF THE STOLEN DRUMS 70

BAM! ■ NGC/92

Reasonable edutainment title, which sees junior gamers globetrotting after an art thief.

CASTLEWEEN 16

WANADOO ■ NGC/81

Unfairly difficult dismal platforming tedium with some kind of cartoony black magic schtick going on.

CATWOMAN 46

EA ■ NGC/97

An unimaginative platform adventure made worse by horribly frustrating gameplay and a rubbish camera.

CEL DAMAGE 60

EA ■ NGC/68

Cel-shaded car-combat game in the vein of violent cartoons. Too manic and confusing for its own good.

CONFLICT DESERT STORM 89

SCI ■ NGC/80

Tense and teeth-gritting, with a great co-op mode. Brain-based fun for those nuclear winter evenings.

CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2 90

SCI ■ NGC/86

Sandy warmongering. You can't let any of your men die in this sequel, leading to all sorts of lifesaving heroics.

CRASH BANDICOOT THE WRATH OF CORTEX 40

VIVENDI ■ NGC/75

One of the worst ports we've seen – of a game that was a load of crap to begin with! Avoid like death.

CRASH NITRO KART 53

VIVENDI ■ NGC/89

The basic graphics and cheaty CPU karters are bad, but the loading times are ridiculous. Buy *Mario Kart.*

CRAZY TAXI 70

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

A title that's so old, it's been included as a minigame in *GTAIII*. Creaky graphics, but still good fun.

DAKAR 2 79

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

Driving around in a vast expanse of dirt for days on end? *Dakar 2* manages to make this pretty good fun.

DARK SUMMIT 51
THQ ■ NGC/69
SSX Tricky with all the speed, style and entertainment removed with near-surgical precision. A waste of time.

DAVE MIRRA 2 FREESTYLE BMX 75
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
Pornography-free, good, moto-cross game. Slick, with big arenas – but will only appeal to the BMX hardcore.

DIE HARD VENDETTA 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/74
Shoot holes in people who look like terrorists, so the US can enjoy one more night of guiltless slumber.

DEAD TO RIGHTS 60
EA ■ NGC/83
Mindless ultraviolence. JACK SLATE is PISSED OFF and wants to HURT SOMEONE!

DEFENDER 50
MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Pointless 3D update that makes one of the hardest-core arcade classics easy and, by extension, depressingly dull.

DEF JAM VENDETTA 87
MAJESCO ■ NGC/82
Wrestling thumpfest featuring all your favourite hip-hop artistes. Bone-crunching moves and 'sick' beats.

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE 74
DISNEY ■ NGC/85
Neither extreme nor adventurous, but fine for people not up to *Tony Hawk's*, like your little brother or nan.

DISNEY'S HIDE & SNEAK 25
CAPCOM ■ NGC/92
Mickey hides in things and sneaks past enemies. Stealth-action without any action. Tedious. Terrible.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR 26
DISNEY ■ NGC/73
The Mouse patronises his way through this hideous 'adventure'. Almost Beckettian in its non-eventfulness.

DISNEY SPORTS BASKETBALL 55
KONAMI ■ NGC/82
Strip away the franchise and it's another simple Sports title. Soon to follow: *Disney Sports Russian Roulette.*

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL 69
KONAMI ■ NGC/76
This isn't anywhere near as bad as you may think. It's an amusing, simple footie game for younger gamers.

DISNEY'S PARTY 56
EA ■ NGC/86
Mickey and chums in a mildly entertaining party game – but would you pay £30 to be mildly entertained?

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING 64
KONAMI ■ NGC/80
The Mouse and his irritating friends try 'busting tricks'. Walt must be spinning in his cryogenic pod.

DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS 32
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/68
Like *Crash Bandicoot*, but with The Duck in charge, going bthackakackth. Also total rubbish.

DOSHIN THE GIANT 62
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Quirky title that puts you in charge of a giant man who must help/hinder islanders. A little short-lived.

TOP FIVE FIGHTING GAMES



SOUL CALIBUR 2
Gorgeous Link-fuelled beat-'em-up from fight kings Namco.

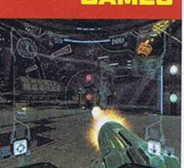
SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
All your favourite Ninty types pounding each other's faces in.

VIEWTIFUL JOE
The only one-player beat-'em-up in our top five. Stunning.

DEF JAM VENDETTA
The wrestling game that appeals to non-grapple fans as well.

MK DEADLY ALLIANCE
"Mind if I remove your spleen?" "Ooh, go on – finish me."

TOP FIVE SHOOTING GAMES



METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure.

TIME-SPLITTERS 2
Class first-person shooting from the *GoldenEye* boys.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
Looks great and lacks the ropy on-foot sections of the sequel.

XIII
Euro-shooter with comic-book looks and very serious violence.

IKARUGA
A pure arcade shooter that's tougher than most.

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 43
ATARI ■ NGC/87
Dated fighter where the characters move as though their feet are lead-plated. Avoid even if you're a DBZ fan.

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D 48
THQ ■ NGC/91
As fiendishly unforgiving as the original, but no fun at all. For nostalgia freaks only.

DRIVEN 60
BAM ■ NGC/68
Very basic, short game of the bad film about driving fast in a circle. Filling up bargain bins as we speak.

DR MUTO 70
MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Amusing mad-doctor platforming game where you have to mutate into different animals to solve puzzles.

DROME RACERS 46
EA ■ NGC/85
Brings absolutely nothing new to racing, and doesn't manage to do the old stuff with any flair either.

EGGO MANIA 49
KEMCO ■ NGC/72
Rubbish take on *Tetris* that, mystifyingly, involves ovulations. Wouldn't look out of place on an Amiga.

ENTER THE MATRIX 73
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Take the red pill and find out how disappointing this movie tie-in is. We were expecting something special.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002 37
KONAMI ■ NGC/67
Combines tiresome button-mashing with equally dull timing and precision exercises. Dull.

ETERNAL DARKNESS 89
EA ■ NGC/74
A Lovecraftian yarn of ancient evils told through 12 playable characters and an innovative magic system.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING 78
KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Snazzy-looking *Hawk's* clone, but then, who wants an Elvis impersonator if the King's in town?

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING 23
KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Fight bad guys while sliding down a hill. Worse than *Dark Summit*. Games like this should be made illegal.

EXTREME G3 85
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
An underrated gem, offering speed, huge tracks, ingenious weaponry and eye-sparkling visuals.

F1 2002 67
EA ■ NGC/71
Rock-hard racing your dad will enjoy. Also features humourless Hun driving robot Schumacher version 1.0.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE 81
EA ■ NGC/83
Packed representation of the glamorous world of F1 team management. You can take the cars for a spin too.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003 83
EA ■ NGC/75
EA finally remember how good football games are made. Actually better than *ISS 2*. A vast improvement.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 85
EA ■ NGC/87
It wasn't broken, but EA fixed it anyway, slinging in more stats, new animations and a great Career mode.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/91
Beautiful looking, but with expensive hardware needs. An ambitious multiplayer RPG that mostly works.

FINDING NEMO 65
THQ ■ NGC/86
Horrible loading times and stuttering graphics spoil what could have been enjoyable for rugrat gamers.

FIREBLADE 59
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
Brain-free 'copter game that'll appeal to military-obsessed psychos and fans of 80s Vietnam war films.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS 83
IO ■ NGC/86
Blast invading Russian commies intent on taking over the US. Realistic? Not on your nelski. Fun? Oh da.

FREEKSTYLE 52
EA ■ NGC/74
If you own *SSX Tricky*, you've no need for this tired and recycled (hah!) *SSX*-on-bikes nonsense.

FROGGER BEYOND 59
KONAMI ■ NGC/80
The trend for 'improving' ancient games by making them 3D taken to its most extreme conclusion.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY 25
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
We'd be far more comfortable with this if we'd had it inserted rectally. An insult to the memory of a classic.

GLADIUS 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Persevere with the tutorials and odd glitches – there's a rewarding strategy title buried under the graphics.

GOBLIN COMMANDER UNLEASH THE HORDE 72
JALECO ■ NGC/92
Lead your rather small army of grunts to victory in this entertaining (if slightly simple) RTS.

GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE 68
ATARI ■ NGC/74
Stompy monster fun in multiplayer mode, but otherwise a little weak. Get *Smash Bros* instead.

GOTCHA FORCE 69
CAPCOM ■ NGC/90
Repetitive robot collect-'em-up battler which is actually pretty good fun, if a tad simple and repetitive.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 78
EA ■ NGC/76
Attractive and competent adaptation of Potter's film – but rather easy. Only die-hard wizard fans need apply.

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE 70
EA ■ NGC/89
Out on PS2 before *CoS*, now out on Cube with graphics nabbed from *CoS*. At least the game's simple…

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN 79
EA ■ NGC/95
The Potter games keep getting better – this'd be fun even without Harry. The controls let it down a tad.

DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

HARRY POTTER QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP — **62**
EA ■ NGC/88
Potter fans will love the details, but as a sports game, this broom-based title is one to sweep under the rug…

THE HOBBIT — **58**
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Competent enough cutesy adventure but somehow not interesting, despite elves and dragons and dwarves.

HOT WHEELS HIGHWAY 35 WORLD RACE — **33**
THQ ■ NGC/90
Ugly, gaudy and slow racer. Oh, and the handling's rubbish. Too boring to have a place on your Cube.

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X — **45**
THQ ■ NGC/75
Basic racing/car-combat game based on plastic toys. Strictly for the very, very young. Or very stupid.

HULK — **65**
VIVENDI ■ NGC/82
Get angry, turn green, and SMASH your way through puny soldiers. Also stealth sections with Bruce Banner.

IKARUGA — **85**
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Old-style shooter – originally designed for robots, now available for human consumption. Very, *very* hard.

ISS 2 — **83**
KONAMI ■ NGC/68
A winning formula tarnished with unnecessary 'improvements'. Good – but also a step backwards.

ISS 3 — **78**
KONAMI ■ NGC/82
The once-invincible football series sinks ever lower with a misguided new 'close-up' mode.

THE ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST — **54**
EIDOS ■ NGC/85
So short, even games goobers can finish it. The lack of variety doesn't help. A mini game in every respect.

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE — **70**
EA ■ NGC/70
Workaday gameplay dressed up in off-the-peg shooter upholstery, shooting baddies with ping-pong balls.

JAMES BOND 007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING — **68**
EA ■ NGC/91
Barely above average, this not-based-on-a-film film tie-in is only redeemed by 007's winning personality.

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE — **72**
EA ■ NGC/75
The best Bond game on Gamecube so far, but the visuals can't hide an FPS that's lacking overall.

JEDI KNIGHT II — **67**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A seriously disappointing PC conversion of an overrated shooter. Huge game, but quite tedious.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD — **20**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Like a nightmare about doing cross-country wearing steel-wool pants and barbed wire flip-flops.

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS — **18**
THQ ■ NGC/78
Tedious, sorry, devoid-of-inspiration 'puzzle' game that actually manages to out-borify *Universal Studios*.

JIMMY NEUTRON JET FUSION — **71**
THQ ■ NGC/89
Jimmy's second game is a big improvement. A simple platformer good for younger gamers.

JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH — **84**
VIVENDI ■ NGC/89
An atmospheric, exciting shooter made better by the presence of the Big Chin himself, Judge Dredd. Drokk!

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER — **75**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/73
Same old trick-based extreme-sports, but this time in tubes made of water. Quite good fun, for a while.

KIRBY AIR RIDE — **51**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/85
Simplistic, unremarkable and undemanding. We *don't* hate Kirbs, but this on-rails racer makes us start to…

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 — **79**
EA ■ NGC/75
If the arcadey nature of *Rocky* doesn't sit that well with you, give this face-smashing simulator a go instead.

LEGEND OF ZELDA OOT MASTER QUEST — **81**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/80
The GC is capable of so much more – but if you didn't send Ganondorf packing years ago, do it now. NOW!

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING — **47**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Bringing back old-skool 'rasslers' isn't enough to make this any good. A shambolic licensing cash-cow.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II — **50**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Yet another travesty of a wrestling game, but made marginally better by the addition of Big Daddy.

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION — **56**
EA ■ NGC/90
Irritating monkey-collecting platformer. You'll find yourself wearing a tinfoil hat to stop all the voices.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE RETURN OF THE KING — **86**
EA ■ NGC/87
More playable characters, including Gandalf, and less button-mashing make an epic, very enjoyable sequel.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS — **68**
EA ■ NGC/78
Repetitive hacking game with RPG overtones. Guide your man through levels making goblin prosciutto.

LOST KINGDOMS — **86**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/70
Collect, er, cards, and battle monsters with them in fantasy landscapes. The sequel does it better, though.

LOST KINGDOMS 2 — **87**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/81
Set 200 years after the events of the first game. It's more satisfying, but it's still on the frothy side.

LUIGI'S MANSION — **88**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/67
Luigi stars in this short, but ace, fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and *Ghostbusters*.

MADDEN NFL 2004 — **87**
EA ■ NGC/85
Great stuff – a satisfying and accessible version of the sport for new *and* experienced Yankee Egg Chasers.

TOP FIVE ADVENTURE /RPGS

ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
Phenomenal. A reason to own Gamecube itself.

METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure. Again.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
A number-cruncher that turns epic with a bit of t'internet.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS
If 'classic' RPGs are your bag, this boy'll be a sackful of joy.

LOST KINGDOMS II
Polished RPG with card collecting elements. Neat.

TOP FIVE ACTION ADVENTURE



HITMAN 2
Compelling assassin sim that kills the competition dead.

SECOND SIGHT
Brilliant psychic stealth-'em-up from the *'Splitters 2* team.

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES
Beautifully updated version of Solid Snake's first outing.

ETERNAL DARKNESS
Another Nintendo exclusive that never fails to entertain.

SPLINTER CELL
Captivating stealth-laced adventure from the hand of Tom Clancy.

MARIO GOLF TOADSTOOL TOUR — **85**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/95
Not as deep and stat-tastic as Tiger Woods, but offers far more in the way of instant, easily accessible fun.

MARIO PARTY 4 — **68**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/75
Disappointing. Not bad if you're in the mood for party fun, but it's done little to improve on the originals.

MARIO PARTY 5 — **80**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/89
A much better boardgame from Mazza, although the new Capsule system can slow things down a lot.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 — **70**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A decent extreme sports sim. A bit slicker than *Dave Mirra*, but with smaller, tighter arenas. Does the job.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE — **74**
EA ■ NGC/75
FPS set during World War II. Looks ropy in places, but it's atmospheric and highly enjoyable.

MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN — **67**
EA ■ NGC/88
Looks so old, it should come with Werthers Originals, and both allies and enemies are a bit thick. Disappointing.

MEGA MAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION — **59**
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
Here's an idea: take a great GBA game, strip the good bits out and put the resulting platformer on GC.

MEN IN BLACK II ALIEN ESCAPE — **45**
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Rubbish off-the-peg third-person shooting game of the rubbish off-the-peg movie. Did we mention it's rubbish?

METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM — **82**
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Well-designed bottylicious shooter. It's big and it's extremely tough. And we all love robots with guns, eh?

MICRO MACHINES — **57**
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Like the recipe for bread or wine gums, *Micro Machines* doesn't change much, and this iteration is no exception.

MINORITY REPORT — **39**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
Astonishingly brutal third-rate ass-whupping game that takes place on the sets of a Spielberg movie.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE OPERATION SURMA — **69**
ATARI ■ NGC/93
More accomplished than the terrible first *M:I* title, but lacking in flexibility and freedom somewhat.

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE — **80**
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
The best *Kombat* yet! The blood-soaked spine-ripping yarn finally gets the update it deserves on Gamecube.

MX SUPERFLY — **63**
THQ ■ NGC/73
Handles like you're driving space bikes on the surface of the moon. The best of a very bad bunch, though.

MYSTIC HEROES — **71**
THQ ■ NGC/75
Simplistic 3D *Gauntlet*-style slasher that's somehow entertaining and charming. Well, Geraint thinks so.

NBA 2K3 — 85
ATARI ■ NGC/79
Puts all other basketball games to shame. Great gameplay complements an engrossing Career mode.

NBA COURTSIDE 2002 — 79
NINTENDO ■ NGC/68
The second-best basketball sim available, but it's still lacking. Strictly for hardcore fans of the Ball of B.

NBA LIVE 2003 — 70
EA ■ NGC/75
The yearly EA update. Solid gameplay; lots of lovely numbers; otherwise not much different from last year.

NBA LIVE 2004 — 86
EA ■ NGC/88
This year's *NBA Live* has tighter controls and a vastly improved Dynasty mode. A tad soulless, mind.

NBA STREET VOL 2 — 88
EA ■ NGC/84
Almost negates the need for realistic sports sims – and all for half the price of real basketball trainers.

NEED FOR SPEED 2 HOT PURSUIT — 69
EA ■ NGC/74
Ironically slow racer. A lazy port has ruined what was originally a pretty entertaining franchise.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND — 77
EA ■ NGC/88
Aargh! I can't see… oh, that's the graphics. This street racer needs a bit more attention to detail, we feel.

NFL 2K3 — 86
ATARI ■ NGC/79
A meaty gridiron sim that could even threaten *Madden*. Management bits don't detract from the gameplay.

NFL STREET — 79
EA ■ NGC/90
American footie hits the streets. The Challenge mode and four-player are great. It'll take ages if you're duff.

NHL 2003 — 64
EA ■ NGC/75
A realistic approach to ice hockey which isn't particularly fast or – more importantly – fun.

NHL 2004 — 57
EA ■ NGC/85
Behind-the-scenes additions don't compensate for the terrible frame rate on the ice. Play it at your peril.

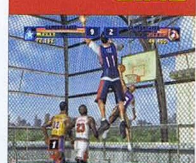
NHL 2K3 — 72
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Complicated ice hockey title with stodgy gameplay. Similar to *NFL 2K3*, but doesn't quite pull it off.

NHL HITZ 20-02 — 79
MIDWAY ■ NGC/67
Exaggerated ice hockey title in a similar vein to *Red Card*, where the sticks aren't just for hitting the puck.

NHL HITZ 20-03 — 65
MIDWAY ■ NGC/74
Another year, another dose of frantic ice action. Not much cop on the original, mind.

PAC MAN WORLD 2 — 70
EA ■ NGC/78
The Pac is back for hilarious retro-themed platforming fun. Shamelessly pilfers everything from *Mario 64*.

TOP FIVE SPORTS SIMS



MARIO GOLF
Arcady golfing fun with the Mushroom Kingdom gang. Links to the GBA game, too.

MADDEN NFL 2004
Madden's still delivering the best pitch-based entertainment on the Gamecube.

NBA LIVE 2004
EA's superb 'serious' basketball title.

FIFA 2004
The best *FIFA* yet.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
The final entry in our sports game listing is both a) another EA game and b) a golf game. It's ace.

TOP FIVE EXTREME SPORTS GAMES



1080° AVALANCHE
More refined and robust than *SSX*.

SSX3
Fantastic sequel with plenty of challenge. More stunts than *1080°* – but not *quite* as polished a racer.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Absorbing wheel-'em-up. *Tony Hawk's 4's* worth a look too.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Roller boot-based *Hawk's* style action.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING
Another *Hawk's* clone that's solidly put together.

PAC MAN VS — 80
NAMCO ■ NGC/90
You have to buy an inferior game to get this multiplayer gem. Innovative but ultimately basic.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE III — 82
SEGA ■ NGC/94
Possibly the best all-out shooter on Gamecube, while online play makes it uniquely rewarding.

PIKMIN — 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/80
Created using textures from Shigsy's own garden. A wonderful RTS with multicoloured vegetable men.

PITFALL THE LOST EXPEDITION — 48
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/92
Colourful but short and shoddily-put-together platformer starring a hero from days of yore.

P.N.03 — 77
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
This super-stylish shooter with its dancing heroine is only marred by dull bosses and design.

POKÉMON CHANNEL — 24
NINTENDO ■ NGC/92
Watch really rubbish telly with Pika. Because that's what having a good time is all about…

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM — 84
NINTENDO ■ NGC/93
Not the epic RPG we expected, but it's fun enough and Colosseum mode will last you forever.

POOL PARADISE — 80
IGNITION ■ NGC/92
Actually quite good tropical-themed pool sim – and you get to play more than boring old nine-ball.

PRO RALLY 2002 — 58
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
An okay game completely and ruthlessly dragged down by its thoroughly awful, frustrating handling.

PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR — 48
KONAMI ■ NGC/74
The only tennis game on 'Cube so far, but with rubbish non-analogue controls and distinctly whiffy visuals.

PUYO POP FEVER — 80
SEGA ■ NGC/91
Blob-bursting puzzle fun. It's nothing very new, but still a great puzzle title. The sort of thing girls love.

RAINBOW SIX 3 — 65
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/96
You can play this like a single-character stealth title, giving you no incentive to use your team. Poor.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP — 74
SCI ■ NGC/78
Solid, does all the things a rallying game should. Should do the job until *McCrae* sees the light of day.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC — 84
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78
The limbless French Freak™ has the last laugh with a game that, insists our correspondent, is actually good.

RED CARD 20-03 — 78
MIDWAY ■ NGC/71
Violent football game where you mince opponents with stud and fist until the meat shows.

RED FACTION II — 66
THQ ■ NGC/82
Shoot capitalist scum in the face and blow some holes in walls in this distinctly average brown fighting game.

REIGN OF FIRE — 59
BAM ■ NGC/76
A poor game of a poor film, even if you do get to burn stuff. Nice ideas ruined by dodgy physics and controls.

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO — 85
CAPCOM ■ NGC/78
Ditches the solo formula for a two-character system. Great set-pieces, looks lovely… more *Resi*, basically.

RESIDENT EVIL — 89
CAPCOM ■ NGC/72
The classic zombie horror-fest, with stunning visuals and a brilliant storyline. Controls are still crap, though.



DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

RESIDENT EVIL 2 — 62
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Experience the shambling, undead terror of original PSone graphics! Revisit Leon and Claire for just… £30!

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X — 70
CAPCOM ■ NGC/91
A very late post of this two-character game. Solid *Resi* gameplay and a great plot are the big draws.

RESIDENT EVIL: NEMESIS — 65
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Braaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiinnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnssssssssssssssssssssss! Etcetera.

ROBOTECH BATTLECRY — 77
TDK ■ NGC/77
Stompy robots go to war in the game of the Japanese cartoon. Not bad, as far as stompy robot games go.

ROCKY — 78
RAGE ■ NGC/74
A solid fighter where you guide Rockies one to five to greatness. Top two-player, loads of unlockable extras.

ROGUE OPS — 62
KEMCO ■ NGC/90
The spirit of Joanna Dark lives on – but only just – in the form of Nikki Connors. Nowhere near as good, mind.

SAMURAI JACK THE SHADOW OF AKU — 50
SEGA ■ NGC/94
Below-par fighting with severely limited fighting. Doesn't do the cartoon series justice.

SCOOBY DOO MYSTERY MAYHEM — 31
THQ ■ NGC/93
Feeble puzzles and a terrible plot mean Scoob continues his run of appaling software mistakes. Rooby Ron't!

SCOOBY DOO NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS! — 36
THQ ■ NGC/75
Platforming non-action that'll interest you for half an hour or until you need the loo; whichever comes first.

THE SCORPION KING — 30
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Bad. Very bad. Guide a poor approximation of The Rock and hit bad guys until they bleed from the eyeholes.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM — 67
ATARI ■ NGC/74
A cartoonish footie game with an interest in violence. Cracking in multiplayer – poor on your own.

SERIOUS SAM NEXT ENCOUNTER — 83
TAKE 2 ■ NGC/94
Cheap, cheerful and fun, although non-stop shooting can get a bit much after a while. Still, for £20…

SHREK 2 — 47
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/95
An innovative co-op mechanism doesn't compensate for the shoddy presentation and dull gameplay.

THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN — 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/87
The Simpsons go all *GTA* and start driving recklessly and doling out the violence. And what's more, it works!

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE — 52
EA ■ NGC/68
A bad *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, with Simpsons characters bolted on, spewing repetitive 'funny' one-liners.

THE SIMS — 81
EA ■ NGC/79
Addictive people simulating comes to the Cube. A great sense of humour and lots of potential for mischief.

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT — 82
EA ■ NGC/89
What's outside the house? Hmm? No longer is your sim confined to his own four walls. Agoraphobics beware.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS — 90
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Vast RPG. "It'll take away a chunk of your life and you won't want it back" claims a man versed in such things.

SMUGGLER'S RUN WARZONES — 78
ROCKSTAR ■ NGC/73
Huge landscapes and fast-paced 'racing' in buggies is let down by repetitive gameplay and awful music.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Sega's annoying mascot on Gamecube, now with an extra dimension added. Does anyone care any more?

SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT — 38
ATARI ■ NGC/83
A GBA link-up feature for GC, but otherwise a straight port of a game that was rubbish to begin with.

SONIC HEROES — 65
SEGA ■ NGC/91
We *don't* hate Sonic, but if he keeps dishing out these woefully inadequate platformers we might start to.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/79
If you have a retro craving, you could do worse: seven games on one disc, accurate down to the loading times!

SPAWN ARMAGEDDON — 52
NAMCO ■ NGC/91
Plays like *Devil May Cry*, but nowhere near as good. Lock on, jump, fight, win, look for next fight…

SPEED KINGS — 57
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Wannabe *Burnout* with, strangely, lots of sliding under lorries involved. Otherwise bland and unnecessary.

SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY — 69
EUROCOM ■ NGC/91
Some seemingly careless flaws ruin an otherwise fun game – and you're going to love that Mummy!

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE — 72
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69
Dodgy control and camera are the only problems with this platform adventure. Voiced by the original cast.

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE 2 — 84
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/96
The feeling of *being* Spider-Man… we've waited a long time for a game that *really* made us feel like a hero.

SPLINTER CELL — 89
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/81
Stealth-fest with a gritty feel and the opportunity to operate various Clancy-approved hi-tech gizmos.

SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW — 78
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/98
A decent game, albeit a poorly converted one, but the horribly glitchy last level spoils it.

TOP FIVE MULTI-PLAYER GAMES



MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!!
The Best Multiplayer Game Ever. We still haven't stopped playing it.

WARIO WARE INC. MEGA PARTY GAME$
Wario Ware made big and multiplayer for the Gamecube. Superb oddball fun.

WORMS 3D
Ace fun with ludicrous weapons and a rising tide.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES
An innovative approach to multiplayer adventuring.

SUPER MONKEY BALL
The second one's slightly better, but they're both really good monkey-rolling fun.

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM — 32
THQ ■ NGC/89
The plot's weak and the levels are badly designed – and Spongebob himself is nauseating.

SPY HUNTER — 55
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
Appaling frame-rate, nasty course design and linear racing make this one to avoid. A pointless remake.

SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY — 40
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Much like *Crash Bandicoot*, this is another shoddy port of a game that was never much fun in the first place.

SSX3 — 89
EA ■ NGC/87
Improves over its excellent predecessor with a range of modes, ludicrous tricks and a *huge* mountain.

SSX TRICKY — 87
EA ■ NGC/69
Has PS2 written all over it, but excellent. Fast courses, shortcuts and mid-piste scrappage equal FUN.

STARFOX ADVENTURES — 72
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Adventure that's way too easy and linear. Should have been far better. Hardly a fitting send-off for Rare.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER — 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
The panting, pot-bellied, rubbish space-assassin gets the *Tomb Raider* treatment in this average game.

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS — 71
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Battlezone-style tank blaster set around Episode II – not as good as *Rogue Leader*, but fun all the same.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER — 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
The most memorable – and the best-looking – Star Wars game yet. The Battle of Hoth will melt your eyes.

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON 3: REBEL STRIKE — 83
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
On-foot bits? Star Wars is about whizzing around in spaceships, not saving some bint with padded ears.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS — 25
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/76
One of the most inept games we've played. Clancy says bury the copies in the desert before anyone notices.

SUMMONER A GODDESS REBORN — 68
THQ ■ NGC/79
Much levelling-up and numbers floating from people's heads. Crappy visuals, but an engrossing adventure.

SUPER BUBBLE POP — 65
JALECO ■ NGC/78
Tetris-y flavoured *Bust-a-Move* for the Sunny Delight generation, with chemically-induced visuals and music.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE ALL STARS — 70
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/89
Bust-A-Move! On your Gamecube! Puzzle fans rejoice – but only buy it if you haven't got a version already.

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS — 60
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Supes redeems himself somewhat with this stylised and maze-free effort based on the animated cartoons.



Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

SUPER MONKEY BALL 88
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Simian-flavoured update of *Marble Madness*. One of the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube games around.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 82
ATARI ■ NGC/78
The apes are back with levels harder of core, and a new story mode involving love, betrayal and banana-theft.

SX SUPERSTAR 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Motocross scrambling, enhanced with a *Def Jam*-style Career mode that involves girlfriend upgrades.

TAK & THE POWER OF JUJU 69
THQ ■ NGC/92
Ticks all the right platforming boxes and is pleasant enough. But exciting? Not remotely.

TARZAN FREERIDE 59
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Disney. Platformer. Need we say any more? Jungle-based gameplay with the Seventh Earl of Greystoke.

TAZ WANTED 52
ATARI ■ NGC/72
Some of the worst level design we've ever seen in this frustrating cel-shaded *Mario*-wannabe platformer.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 40
KONAMI ■ NGC/92
Pick a turtle. Any turtle. They're all the same. A shallow button-basher that should've stayed in the sewer.

TETRIS WORLDS 38
THQ ■ NGC/73
THQ ruin one of the Best Games Ever by trying to make it 'better'. Will anyone stop these people?

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003 82
EA ■ NGC/75
The world most efficient golf robot gets his own game. Actually really good, in a surprisingly arcadey way.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 84
EA ■ NGC/86
Apart from the ginormous size and a few tweaks for stattoes, it's the same as the last one.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 66
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/79
Clancy has another go at squad-based tactical ops, and this time things run more smoothly. Entertaining stuff.

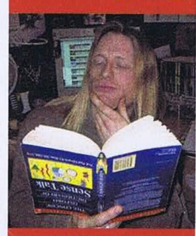
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 87
ACTIVISION NGC/67
Mental grinds and stunts backed up by a mountain of extras – if you haven't tried *Hawk's*, do it now.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 85
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
No time limits and great RPG elements complement the larger areas in *TH4* – a well-tweaked fourquel.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 79
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
The latest Hawk's lacks visual polish but the Story mode's been massively improved.

TOP ANGLER 35
XICAT ■ NGC/81
Generic fishing game involving bass, that doesn't even get the basics of its limited genre right. Tiresome.

PAUL'S SENSE TALK



GRATITUDE
Contrary to the popular saying, I'd advise that you DO look a gift horse in the mouth. 'Cos if it dies, you've got to pay someone to collect it before it starts to smell. That's no gift, that's a pain in the arse.

MACHO MAN
Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer.

HOOD WINKED
If Robin Hood took from the rich to give to the poor… wouldn't that make the rich the poor and the poor the rich, and then he would've had to steal from the rich (who were poor at first) and give to the poor (who were the rich at first)? That's a job for life, that is.

MICROBES
That patch of green fur on the bottom of my coffee mug. You never know, it may well be a cure for cancer… or more probably, just a cause of sickness and diarrhoea.

READER SENSE
Happiness is like wetting your pants, everyone can see it but only you can feel the warm sensation.
Bob Arnold, Email
(So if you wet someone else's pants, would that would be like sharing a joke? – PE)

Do you have more 'sense' than our Sense Master Paul Edwards? Probably! He wants your Sense Talks, mate!

Send them to him at **paul.edwards@futurenet.co.uk** or to Sense Talk at the usual address.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES 71
VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
Movie-based flyboy antics. GC's only flight 'sim' – pretty challenging, but we recommend you try it first.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 60
EA ■ NGC/76
An average platformer with an Antipodean twist. It's a solid example of the genre but nothing more or less.

TUROK EVOLUTION 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/73
Disappointing dino-hunting FPS sequel. Not as bad as *Turok 3* on N64, but serious niggles let the series down.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Looks great, but can be fiddlier than a violinists' convention. As close as you'll get to *GTA* on 'Cube.

UFC THROWDOWN 51
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/73
Freestyle thump-fest, where you lead your oily man to victory in some Greek-style athletic contest.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS 24
KEMCO ■ NGC/67
Anyone who makes a game involving picking up litter should be stuffed into a suitcase and hurled into the sea.

URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER 17
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/91
The characters are loathsome and the animation's terrible. A new low for Gamecube sports games.

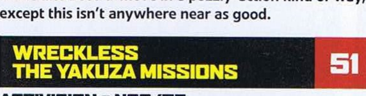
V-RALLY 3 68
ATARI ■ NGC/82
Speedy rallying game that wouldn't be so bad if they'd concentrated on the basics first. Like, er, the steering.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002 55
ATARI ■ NGC/69
Nice to look at, horrible to play. Rubbish AI and unwieldy controls make for a bobbins game of footie.

WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO 70
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/87
Recreates the plasticene duo's world brilliantly. Only a few fiddly bits let this youngsters' platformer down.

WARIO WORLD 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/83
The anti-Mario gets his own game. A surreal frenzy of lowbrow humour and monster-hitting. Waah!

WORLD RACING 19
TDK ■ NGC/94
Huge, with multiple routes, but grotty. Cars pause, the sky vanishes, you can drive on the sea… shoddy.



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/79
Well-crafted but unashamedly derivative Mario knockoff. Lots of collecting, dodgy camera.

WORMS BLAST 63
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
Kinda like *Bust-a-Move* in a puzzly-action kind of way, except this isn't anywhere near as good.

WRECKLESS THE YAKUZA MISSIONS 51
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Drive like a loon and smash up cars and anything else that gets in your way. Sub-*Burnout* nonsense.

WWE CRUSH HOUR 43
THQ ■ NGC/83
Those magnificent greasy men drive greasy fighting machines for some unlikely *Vigilante 8*-style 'thrills'.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Okay, but with nothing particularly new and a familiar engine. But if you insist on buying these things…

WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/85
Clumsy interface, limited CAW parts and irritating Story mode. Still, it'll sell loads, no matter what its flaws are.

XGRA 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/89
Okay future racer, hampered by the fact that it's come out at nearly the same time as the superior *F-Zero GX*.

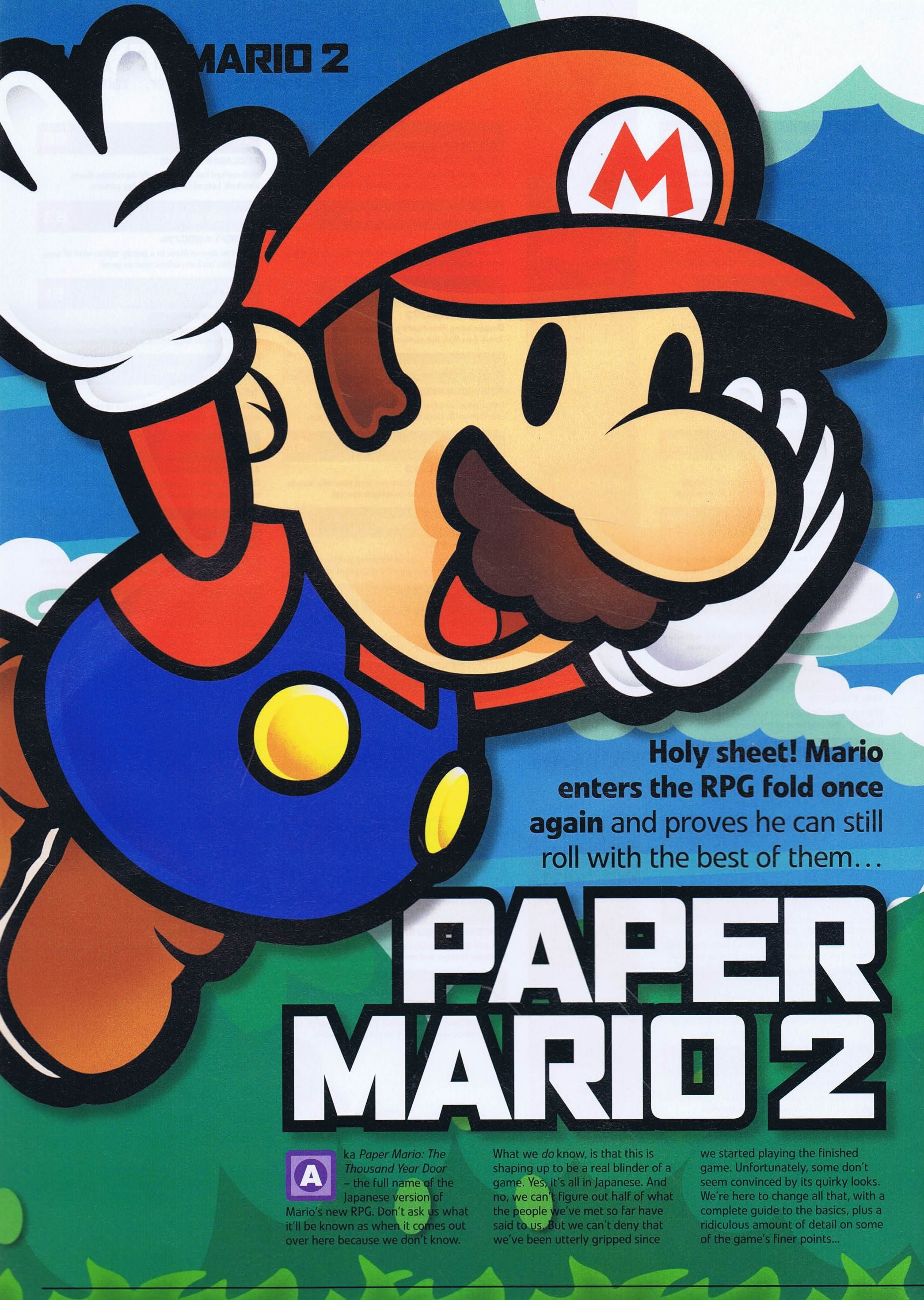
XIII 86
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88
A flawed gem of a shooter. Rock-hard in places, with wonderful set pieces and comic-book-style graphics.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION 55
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Duller than dishwater. Fighting-by-numbers stuff that offers little of interest. Waste of a pretty cool licence.

X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE'S REVENGE 64
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/82
Is he a man? Is he a wolf? Is he a genetically engineered super-soldier? Fighting with the clawed X-Man.

ZOOCUBE 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/71
Puzzler involving a rotating mouth that sucks animal genitals and goes 'moo', 'oink', 'quack' and 'wah!'





Holy sheet! Mario enters the RPG fold once again and proves he can still roll with the best of them…

PAPER MARIO 2

Aka *Paper Mario: The Thousand Year Door* – the full name of the Japanese version of Mario's new RPG. Don't ask us what it'll be known as when it comes out over here because we don't know. What we *do* know, is that this is shaping up to be a real blinder of a game. Yes, it's all in Japanese. And no, we can't figure out half of what the people we've met so far have said to us. But we can't deny that we've been utterly gripped since we started playing the finished game. Unfortunately, some don't seem convinced by its quirky looks. We're here to change all that, with a complete guide to the basics, plus a ridiculous amount of detail on some of the game's finer points…

PAPER MARIO 2

Mazza proves he's a card man



SO, IT'S A MARIO GAME – BUT AN RPG?

Yup. It's an RPG through and through. A story-driven affair that relies on wandering around towns and dungeons, talking to inhabitants, solving puzzles and participating in turn-based battles. All your staple RPG trappings are there: item shops, side-quests, inns for resting up and, yes, levelling up through experience points.



NAH... IT'LL NEVER WORK...

Well that's where you're wrong, see. It's already worked. Three times, actually. Both the SNES and the N64 had a Mario RPG each, and more recently *Superstar Saga* appeared on GBA. It's safe to say that all of them were absolutely brilliant.

SO WHAT'S THE STORY?

Peach has been kidnapped. Again.





HOW ORIGINAL!

No wait, it's not what you think. It's not Bowser this time! You see Peach has gone off looking for some Legendary Treasure and wants Mario's help. So she sends him a special map (which turns out to be magic and all that guff) and agrees to wait for him at Hoodlum City harbour. When he gets there, she's nowhere to be seen. So, he sets off to find seven special stars that will get him through the mysterious 1,000-year door to the treasure. Hopefully he'll catch up with Peach along the way…

AND?..

Well, it turns out Peach has been kidnapped by the 'Megabaten' – a bunch of alien-wizardy-looking folk who are searching for the treasure and the map that Peach gave to Mario. Bowser, a bit miffed that someone else has snatched her, sets off to 'rescue' her and kidnap her for himself.



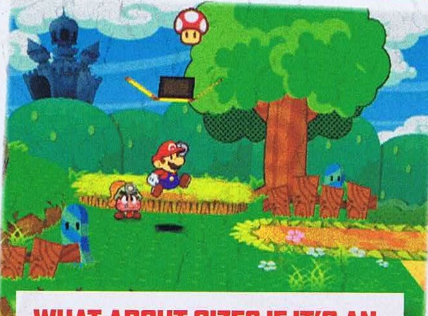
SO WHAT'S ALL THIS 'PAPER' BUSINESS THEN?

It's mostly got to do with the visual style the game uses. Even though it looks 3D, the characters are all paper-thin. As you progress, Mario can use this unique property to fold himself into a paper plane, roll up into a tube, slide through cracks in walls and even turn into an origami boat…



SOUNDS WEIRD, DID SHIGSY MAKE IT?

No. It's made by Intelligent Systems, the people behind the excellent *Advance Wars*, *Fire Emblem* and *Mario and Luigi Superstar Saga*. Oh and *Paper Mario* on N64, which we gave 90% back in **NGC**/58. They're very talented, you know.



WHAT ABOUT SIZE? IF IT'S AN RPG, IT'D BETTER BE BIG.

Well, put it this way, we've already cracked over 20 hours of it and we reckon we're roughly halfway through. And as it's in Japanese, we've just been concentrating on the main adventure and have barely touched any of the side-quests (which is why we're not reviewing it this month). So, yes, it's 'big'.

IF IT'S NOT A 'PROPER' MARIO GAME, WHY SHOULD I BOTHER?

It's not a 'Proper' Mario game, you're right. Instead, it's a *festival* of Mario. A celebration of the plumber's universe, riddled with in-jokes and visual gags and – if our Japanese extended beyond mouthing the hiragana like a pre-schooler armed with a dictionary – probably a whole lot more in the dialogue. All of Mario's past RPGs, without exception, have been brilliantly localised and laugh-till-it-hurts funny. Yes, it's an RPG, but it's an RPG made the *Nintendo way*, with Nintendo's high production values, original touches and inimitable charm. Just take the turn-based battle as an example… (you might want to turn the page for this one…)



BREAK A LEG

The innovative battle system ripped apart...



iTEMS

Mario can hold up to ten items at a time (but can store more in the towns), and you use them to heal and boost your strength as well as attack – via classic POW blocks and flower items.



BOOT

Run, jump, bounce and damage. Simple as that. It's useful against airborne enemies, but inadvisable against ones with spiked heads.



HAMMER

The trusty old mallet. This is, obviously, useless against airborne enemies, but dead handy if you want to smash something really hard into the ground.



SPECIALS

The star represents your Special Attacks. You start with one and then you're awarded another for every star you find. They take the form of super-powerful attacks that you charge up by pleasing the crowd.



BOOT

SIDEKICKS

Along the way you pick up friends who assist you both in and out of battle. These are among the first you'll encounter.

CHRISTINU



1. The first companion you get. Christinu isn't the most powerful companion but her jumping ability is great for aerial foes.



2. Her speciality is giving Mario general information as well as collecting data on the individual enemies you encounter.

NOKOTARO



1. This koopa is one of the handiest companions. His classic shell attack allows you to hit enemies in a row.



2. While out of battle you can use him to grab distant items and activate switches remotely.

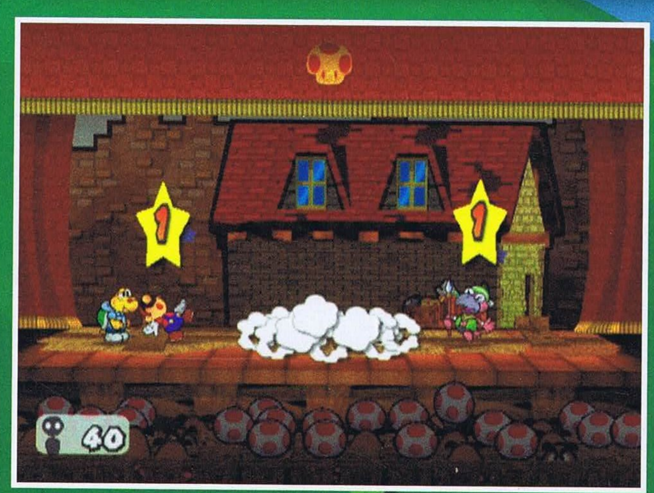
CLOUDA



1. Apparently she's 'just as beautiful' as the 1,000-year door treasure you're hunting. Find her necklace and she'll join you.



2. What with being a cloud, she's a dab hand at this blowing lark and is invaluable when it comes to finding secret entrances.



SCENERY

Whack the stage with your hammer a few times too many and the scenery lining the stage is likely to fall down. It's difficult to predict when this will happen, and the backdrop is just as likely to hit you as it is the enemy.

ACTION COMMAND

This is an integral part of Paper Mario's brilliant battle system. Rather than just selecting an action and watching the results play out, you have to take a more pro-active approach to fighting...



1 You can double the damage of jumping attacks by tapping A at the point of impact. Later power-ups let you build up damage with successive successful timed stabs at the A button.



2 Other attacks, like the hammer, require you to tilt the analogue stick and release it at a certain point. Likewise, Special Attacks may require multiple analogue or button inputs to maximise their effect.



3 Hit A just before an enemy strikes and Mario will adopt a defensive position, diminishing strong attacks and even negating weaker ones. Pressing B will also let you counterattack, although this is tougher.

ENCORE!

The audience plays a number of important roles in a battle, so pay attention...



1 The crowd builds up the better you fight – indicated by the little icon in bottom left hand corner. Try to fill up the audience as quickly as possible...



2 Fight like a pro, defending and using action commands, and the crowd will fill up your star meter – letting you use special attacks more often.



3 If you fight badly, they'll hurl items at you and your enemy. In some cases you'll even have to jump into the crowd to deal with any rowdy audience members.



LEVEL-UP

After collecting 100 EXP, Mario will gain a level. At this point you can choose whether to boost his HP, his FP (which allows you to pull off stronger basic attacks) or his badge points, which give you greater freedom for customisation.

BINGO

As a bonus, every time you complete an action command, you'll be awarded a little symbol (mushroom, flower, star etc) at random. Get two of the same in a row and you'll enter 'Bingo' mode. A roulette wheel will flash up and you'll have the chance to match the third symbol. If you get it right, you'll get your health, flower power or star power refilled. Watch out for the toadstool: if you get three of these all your stats will be halved.



PAPER MARIO 2

"Virtually bursting at the seams with activity"

YOSHI'S STORY

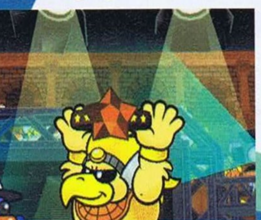
Every Mario game needs the egg-squitting dino.



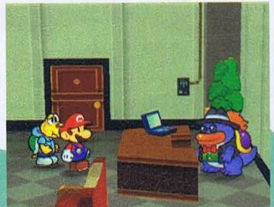
1. This is Oolong Town. It's kind of like the Mushroom Kingdom equivalent of Las Vegas, right down to the dodgy goings-on…



2. There's a battle stadium here where fighters from all over the kingdom compete in ranking battles for a cash prize.



3. This fella is the reigning champ. The belt (complete with star stone) is the ultimate prize, which you're going to have to fight for.



4. This is the boss of the whole operation – he's like a big blue Don King, arranging the fight and setting conditions for the bouts.

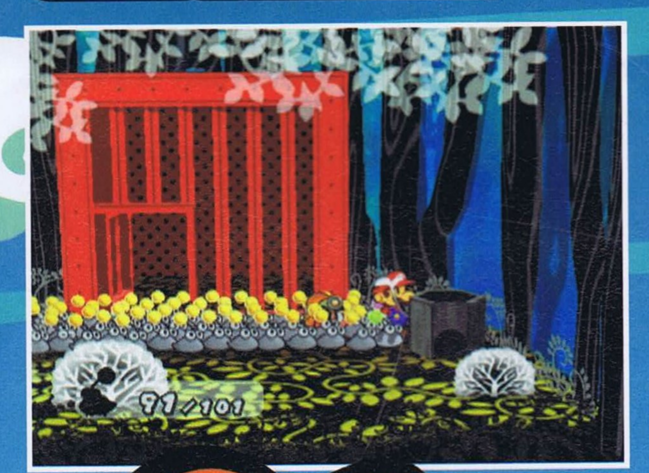


5. When you're at the bottom of the leagues, you start in this squalid little locker room. Use the GBA on the wall to start battling.

SLUG ARMY

In a touch that's reminiscent of Pikmin, the 'dungeon' for the second star puts you in command of an army of slugs…



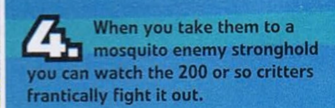


1. You need to free the slugs from a cell as they are currently at war with mosquito-like enemies who have taken over their arboreal habitat.

2. They're not the brightest of creatures so you have to get Clouda to blow them around to help them reach their destination.



3. In special areas you're able to gather them into groups, and you can use them as counterweights to operate secret entrances and lifts.



4. When you take them to a mosquito enemy stronghold you can watch the 200 or so critters frantically fight it out.



HOW TO BUILD YOUR 3D BATTLE SCENE



1 Get yourself a pair of scissors and some double-sided tape (or maybe some glue or Blu-tac) and cut out each shape.



2 Take the brown rectangle and fold it up, sticking the two white tabs at the back before sticking the stage to the backdrop.



6. *Winning isn't enough, though. You have to fulfil certain conditions, like not using any FP, taking a set amount of damage and so on…*



7. *Eventually you'll find you can't progress any further through the fights. Not without the help of this giant bouncing, talking egg.*



8. *Just as you reach your most difficult battle, Yoshi hatches, bringing his own brand of special moves to the table.*



9. *He can gobble up enemies in the usual way and then spit them back out at any other enemies in the area – an essential skill later on.*



10. *He also has a bonus ability: when Mario's riding him, movement around the game world is much faster and easier.*

CROWD CONTROL

Because of the simple visuals, huge amounts of enemies can be crammed onto the screen at once. Sometimes it's virtually bursting at the seams with activity. Our favourite sees you swamped by hundreds of skeletal koopas who block the way to the entrance and push Mario back in a tidal wave of bony bodies. Getting your hammer out and hitting the floor sends them cascading out of the screen in an intensely satisfying fashion.







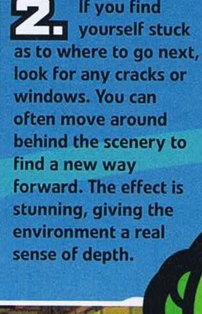
BEHIND THE SCENES



1. Nothing is ever quite what it seems in *Paper Mario*. The backgrounds, for example, aren't always merely decorative. Jump into a nearby pipe here and you can run around in the background and access new areas.



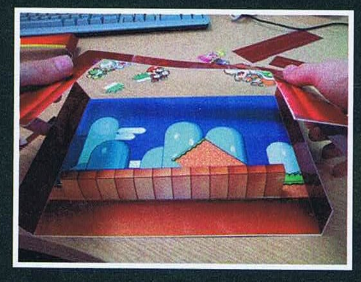
2. If you find yourself stuck as to where to go next, look for any cracks or windows. You can often move around behind the scenery to find a new way forward. The effect is stunning, giving the environment a real sense of depth.



3. The way the 3D world works is quite remarkable and really encourages you to explore everything meticulously. In this instance, creep through these two houses and the screen swings round 180°, offering a whole new hidden area.



Found three bonus sheets of Paper Mario art in this month's bag? Wondering how on earth you're supposed to put them together? Read on.



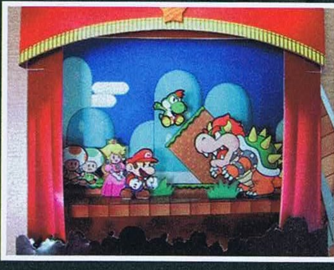
3 Fold the sides of the backdrop and the curtains along the dotted line and stick them together to form a box.



4 Fold the curtain top and the crowd scene and stick them to the top and bottom of the box. Note our support strip.



5 Using the white tabs provided, stick your characters to the background. Use Blu-tac to be able to remove them.



6 And there you go! Use those extra coloured bits of card to provide more support for the crowd and curtains.

PAPER MARIO 2

"Exploiting the papery theme to the full"



△ Stare at this scene long enough and you'll see a dancing, frozen husky.

YOU LITTLE RIPPER

Paper is the defining theme of the game – which is no surprise given the title – and it works in a number of ways, both visually, and as a way of bringing in new gameplay elements.



1. You have to earn your papery skills. Find a grey chest and the spirit inside will 'curse' you with the ability to change your shape.



2. You can use some of the skills at will, such as the ability to turn 90° and slip through bars and cracks in the landscape.



3. Others, like the paper plane and the boat, only work when you're at special pads dotted around the environment.



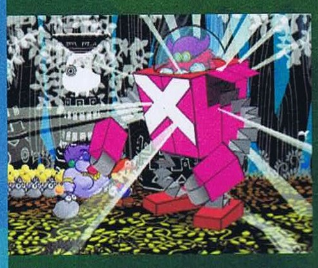
4. Just as in games like *Zelda*, part of the fun comes from returning to previously inaccessible areas to use or find new items.



5. Combine you skills with your allies' abilities to solve puzzles. Here your Koopa friend drains a pool into the floor below.



6. The paper theme is ubiquitous. Here, Mario jumps on a switch to activate a bridge that builds as pages are turned.



7. Entering and exiting houses sees walls collapse and bosses fold themselves into existence from flat pieces of paper.



8. Look out for rips, peeling scenery and so on. Find the skill to exploit them and you'll see strips of scenery torn away.

THE VERDICT

What? No review? No score? Much like when we first looked at *Crystal Chronicles*, we don't think a score is appropriate in this case. Given that Mario's RPGs have always been as much about the dialogue as the puzzles and the battles, it's impossible to rate the game accurately – and anyone who tells you otherwise (unless they're fluent in Japanese) is lying. We know, for example, that there's a huge number of side-quests accessible from the central hub but we don't know what they are and so can't properly explore them. There's extensive dialogue, a number of occasions where you have multiple choice questions and, if past games are anything to go by, a great deal of humour. Without the ability to fully comprehend, you're not going to get the full experience. Simple as that.

We *can* tell you that we've been enjoying the game immensely. Despite the language barrier, Nintendo's core traits of super-high production values and accessibility remain intact, and after just a couple of hours it's easy to see that this is a game of remarkable quality. Nintendo have really pushed the boat out when it comes to exploiting the papery theme to the full. Mario glides into bed, slithers down pipes and flaps about as his flat frame drags



SURPRISE!

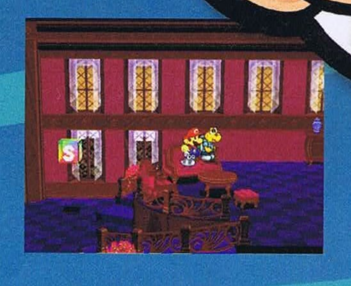
The battle begins even before the encounter starts. You can see enemies roaming around and both you and they have a chance to initiate a surprise attack. If you stomp or hammer them before they catch you, you'll get a free hit at the start of a battle. Later on this can make all the difference.



△ On your journey, you'll find secret Shines hidden away in boxes – these level-up your companion.







BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Peach has a secret admirer – and Bowser, her all-too-obvious admirer, isn't happy about it!



The mysterious onlooker gazes on as Peach takes a shower in her holding cell. It turns out to be a HAL-like supercomputer who wants Peach to teach it how to love.



In return for enabling her to send emails to Mario, the computer pleads with Peach to dance for him using a hologram of herself as her dance partner. Kinky.



Bowser here is searching for Peach after he finds out someone else has kidnapped her. You get to play as him after completing each chapter as Mario.



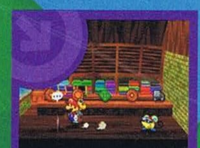
After Mario collects the second Star, you get to take Bowser on this Super Mario Bros-style minigame – where mushrooms are replaced by meat.

against the air. Buildings collapse, scenery rips and falls away and screens fold, scrunch and roll away to reveal new scenes. From the screenshots it all looks very 'kiddie' – but that's an inaccurate description. Yes, it's very childlike, but it's so unashamedly playful it's enchanting. It's almost like a pantomime in videogame form, and even the most cynical of gamers will find its beguiling cheerfulness difficult to resist.

But for all its primary colours and striking visual touches, *Paper Mario's* beating heart is its cunning little puzzles, lateral thinking, heavily tactical battles pre-planning and customisation. We've gone into great detail about the battle system on the previous couple of pages, but tactically, it's more involving than it looks. You can't really power-level in *Paper Mario*. There are places where you can engage in continuous fights if you really want to, but instead the emphasis is on the wisdom of your choices in battle. You genuinely feel as though it's *you* who's making the difference in a battle. You, instead of your artificially-inflated stats from hour upon hour of mindless encounters.

"YES, IT'S VERY CHILDLIKE, BUT IT'S SO UNASHAMEDLY PLAYFUL IT'S ENCHANTING"

The result is a truly refreshing RPG. As a genre, RPGs can often feel rather tired (*Final Fantasy X* anyone?) and this amply demonstrates that it needn't be that way. Nintendo, or rather Intelligent Systems, have shown that while the basic RPG conventions can remain the same, a little inventiveness and imagination can go a long way towards making it feel like a new experience. If you haven't placed this on your most wanted list, we suggest you do so. Now.



MY MARIO

Dotted around the game-world are badges that you can assign to Mario using 'badge points'. These can give Mario and his companions new attacks, better strength or defence, or extra skills like the ability to see enemy stats or increased chances of evading attacks. There are loads of different badges, allowing you to customise Mario.



EXPERT TIPS, TOUGH CHALLENGES, TRIVIA AND MORE

NGC EXTENDED PLAY

DON'T MISS...



The first part of our full *Second Sight* walkthrough. Plus a top compo... P74



CONTENTS

Play more, laugh more – more fun with games.

CHECK IT!...

△ Games you'll never see. (Well, apart from here.)

△ How Ubi Soft woke their Prince Charming...

Mend your brain in Second Sight...

SECOND SIGHT





WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

You wake up in a psychiatric hospital with no knowledge of who you are or how you got there, but you do have some helpful psychic powers. To begin with, though, you just need to escape from your cell...

MIND TRICK TIPS

John Vattic is more powerful than even he could possibly imagine, possessing a brainload of powers to outwit his foes...



TELEKINESIS
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 1

Use: Enables you to target specific objects and manipulate them using only your mind.
Power tip: You can levitate objects and use them as shields as you walk behind them.



HEALING
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 1

Use: Psychic power permitting, find a quiet spot and you can regenerate your energy bar.
Power tip: By targeting allies later in the game, you're able replenish their energy levels too.



PSI ATTACK
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 3

Use: Charge it up, then release a plasma ball of energy to knock an enemy off their feet.
Power tip: If you're low on ammo, use this. It works against security cameras too.



CHARM
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 3

Use: Transmit manipulative thoughts to your enemy and convince them they can't see you. Thus you become invisible.
Power tip: Be warned, you can't manipulate the mindless, so this skill doesn't work on security cameras.

PROJECTION
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 5

Use: Cast an ethereal version of yourself to walk through laser fences, scout and survey ahead.
Power tip: Always always always make sure you hide in some secluded corner before projecting or you'll get spotted!

PSI ATTACK (UPGRADE)
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 5

Use: Charge it up and – *goosh!* – a more powerful shockwave will take down anyone in the vicinity.
Power tip: When outflanked and out-gunned, this will buy you vital seconds to get away.

POSSESSION
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 8

Use: After casting a Projection, get near an enemy and take over their body for your own devious means.
Power tip: Use it to draw foes out of position or, better still, to gun each other down.

TELEKINESIS (UPGRADE)
LEVEL ACQUIRED: 6

Use: You're able to levitate heavy objects and humans.
Power tip: You can target humans well out of gun range, making this is a satisfying stealth attack of sorts.

HIDE!

Triggered an alarm? Is an endless stream of enemies baying for blood? Need to lie low until things calm down? Then you can hide...

- *UNDER THINGS: Crouch down and crawl under a table or desk (in first-person) and pray you don't get rumbled.*



- *IN THINGS: See those lockers, cupboards and khazis? Get inside. You can even peek out to see when the coast is clear.*



- *OVER THINGS: In rarer instances you can grab hold of ledges and platforms, haul yourself up and wait.*



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 97!

Delightfully atmospheric. The levels are tightly designed, offering plenty of scope for replay, while its distinctive style and original touches make it one of the most memorable games we've played in years.

NGC 90

ENEMY ANNIHILATION

Dirty, no-good, alarm-triggering toerags! Yes, the enemies in Second Sight are out to stop you completing your mission, but thankfully there are plenty of ways to take them down. And you don't need weapons for many of them. Check these out...



1. SHOOT THEM – *Not very original, but your field training will teach you all about ducking behind objects and precision shooting – and it'd be rude not to use all those guns.*



2. TOSS THEM – *This is more like it. With the Telekinesis upgrade, you can pick foes up, fling them through windows and drop them from a height – all with a funny rag-doll effect.*



3. TOSS & SHOOT – *Yes, a good tactic when you're battling one-on-one is to levitate the enemy, rendering them defenceless, and then draw your gun and blast them as they dangle.*



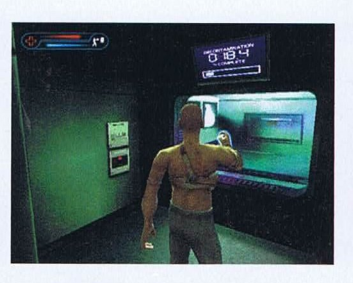
4. TURN THEM – *Later in the game you'll acquire the Possession skill, which means you can control one enemy and use them to shoot their mates, thus triggering their own little stand-off.*

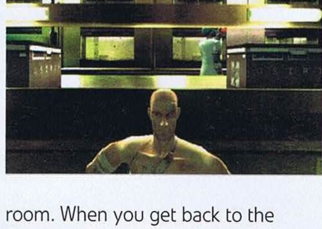


5. STRIKE THEM – *Spy a group of guards in the distance, then use your Telekinesis ability to pick up an inanimate object and then bowl the hapless fools clean over. Str-rikkkke!*

STEP BY STEP…











LEVEL 1
ISOLATION

Waking up more spaced out than a Greek sprinter, your first task is to escape from your observation room. Walk to the door, target the control panel outside and use your Telekinesis power to open it. As Telekinesis and the manipulation of objects plays such an important part in the game, practice your powers in the next room by mentally moving the monitors from the tables and tossing them around.

When you venture into the corridor you'll notice two guards standing at the far end. If you get too close they'll spot you and sound the alarm, so target the dustbin next to them and levitate it with Telekinesis before knocking the guards down like skittles. Rush up to them and put the boot in before they get up, then take the key they drop and use it to open the lab.

Use the computer and highlight the lift on the map. In the process you'll call up an info box giving you the code you need to access the lift.

LEVEL 2
PREPARATION

This flashback is essentially just a training level in which you'll learn more about moving around unseen and handling firearms. It's standard stuff but it's worth noting that once you have completed all the tasks, you'll unlock 'Diligence: Starke's Extra Challenge' on the Level Select screen. To access it, just select the Preparation level and the extra test will appear as an option for your starting point.

In this extra level you must infiltrate a warehouse and obtain enemy plans. There are two different routes in, both presenting taxing obstacles to overcome. It should certainly separate the men from the munchkins.

LEVEL 3
EXPERIMENTATION

Use the computer on the desk and select the CCTV Streamer. Cycle through the various surveillance cameras and disable them in turn, then use the computer to unlock the nearby door.

When the cops come calling in the foyer, we don't advise attempting to fend them off – more will respawn. Instead, just run straight across the back of the room and exit via the vent hidden behind the small stack of boxes.

You can easily tackle the next few sections using stealth. If you get spotted and the guards sound the alarm, remember there's always a locker nearby that you can hide in until the commotion dies down.

When you emerge in the guarded corridor, look to the right and you'll see a guard standing outside a door at the bottom. Use Telekinesis and highlight the wall panel next to him, then pull the panel open to distract him. When his back is turned, walk down the passage and go through the first door on the left. Crouch down and press yourself up against the table and you'll overhear a conversation between a guard and a scientist.

Now you can wait for the conversation to end before leaving quietly through the opposite door, or you can have fun by levitating one of the boxes using Telekinesis and using it to break one of the glass panels on the back wall, thus freeing a swarm of angry bees that'll chase the other occupants of the room away.

Your route is leading towards the chemical store room. Once there, hide behind the second clump of canisters until a patrolling guard comes down off the walkway and stands next to the canisters. When he's in position, crouch-run up the steps, move along the walkway and climb down the first ladder, timing your descent so that the worker has his back to you.

Once you've learnt the Charm ability, knock out the enemy guarding the contaminated room and then highlight one of the extractor fans through the window before using Telekinesis to speed up the decontamination process.

When the room's free of gas, go inside, head up the steps, target the control panel through the window down below and use Telekinesis to drop the railings. A troop of guards will be called to your position, so hide beneath the second set of steps, switch to the fixed camera view so you can see where they are, then use Charm to walk straight back out of the room. When you get back to the Chemical Storeroom, look left and you should see a vent to the side of the door. Crawl through here to get to Microanalysis lab 'A'. There are now two routes you can take to get to the Patient Records Room.

NGC TOP TIP

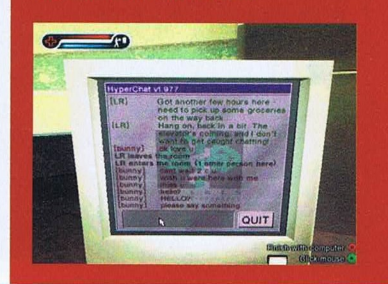
In the Primate lab, use Charm to walk past the gorillas, otherwise they'll become alarmed and the doors to Dr Gidder's lab will lock electronically. Pick up the tranquilliser gun from his lab while you're there.

Route A: Once in Microanalysis Lab A, look for the conveyor belt – the railings of which you just lowered – and hop on. Follow this up to the Store Room before looking for a vent on the right-hand wall and taking this down to the Patient Records Room.

Route B: In Microanalysis Lab A, Charm your way past the guards and head down to Microanalysis Lab B. In the Primate lab you can choke Dr Gidder to get a keycard allowing you access to the main door of the Patient Records Room.

FUNNY BUNNY

Hidden away on the computer near the start of Level 3 is a mugshot of you (which you should find circulated on every computer from now on) and a program called 'Hyperchat' in the 'Front desk applications' folder. Run this program and you'll see that by killing the guard you've just interrupted a saucy email conversation between said guard and 'Bunny'. As you stand watching the screen more messages will appear.





LEVEL 4
FIELDWORK

This level's pretty linear to begin with. Help your team mates by picking off the distant enemies with your sniper rifle and, once you reach the power plant, break off to the left and follow Jayne. There'll be a small room around the side of the power plant – go in.

You'll come to a dead-end in the engine room, so head up the steps and you should see a ladder around the far side of the walkway. Up there you'll find a lever to release the door. (Also check for supplies in the room at the end of the walkway.)

Protect Jayne by wasting the Russians in the neighbouring rooms and then head through to the main control room. You'll find you don't know the password to access the computer just yet, but if you wait a few minutes Jayne will give it to you. Check the wastebasket on the computer desktop for an interesting file before fighting your way back downstairs.



HANDY HINT

This is the only way to use Dr Terry's laptop!



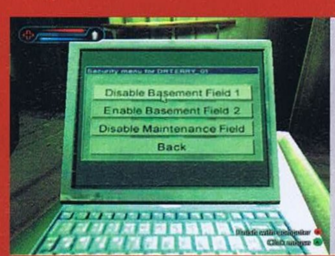
1. You see Dr Terry experimenting on that gorilla? Use Charm to walk past him and hide in the nearest locker down the far end of the area.



2. Peek out of your locker hidey-hole, ensure Dr Terry is nearby, and then target the clock up on the wall using Telekinesis.



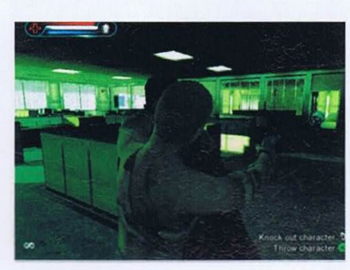
3. By speeding up the hands of the clock, you'll fool Dr Terry into thinking it's later in the day than it really is and he'll use his laptop.



4. Once he's entered his password, wait until the doctor goes away, then use his laptop to disable two further laser fences.







LEVEL 5
ESCAPE

Crouch behind a desk and pick off the guards that enter the room by shooting them in the head with the tranquilliser gun. When the coast is clear, head down in the lift. Once you've acquired the Projection skill and deactivated the laser fence, be sure to activate it again to stop a troop of enemies from following you down the passage from the elevator.

There are three security cameras in this area – one straight ahead, one around the corner to the left and another straight ahead if you go through the connecting passage. Use Telekinesis to disable them but hide yourself afterwards because a furnace worker is likely to investigate their malfunctioning. You could take out the workers individually using Charm, but there's a far better way to get through this section – see the Top Tip for how to disable the cameras without arousing suspicion.

Stand on the elevator and use Projection, then send your ethereal image over to activate the controls before cancelling the power as your real body moves upwards. Here you'll be given your Psi Attack upgrade, but after the cut-scene you'll need to finish all the enemies while they're down to prevent them getting up and attacking you again.

You can Telekinetically hurl inanimate objects at the enemies or pick foes off with your guns in the next section, then go to the control booth and press the button to lower the fence. After using Projection again to go up on the second elevator, there's a short-cut you can take to the car park, but you must have used Dr Terry's laptop to disable the laser fence at the bottom of the ladder over to the left to use it.

NGC TOP TIP

To pass the security cameras without breaking them, sneak up and press the green button on the wall to distract one, then sneak around to Dr Terry's area and use his laptop to disable them all.

LEVEL 6
MADNESS

You can use Charm to knock out each guard in the yard in turn, but a stealthier way is to head over to the far side of the yard, use Charm to avoid detection and slip into the vent leading up to the front of the asylum. Here you can climb in through the open window.

Your Telekinesis power will be upgraded to levitate humans in the Asylum, so put it to good use by tossing the second guard around. Get the Library Key from him and head upstairs. In the library, the doctors have no idea who you are so you can roam freely. There are many points of interest in the library…

Once you're through the upper doors, go through the vent and make your way downstairs. In the ward, use Charm and knock out one of the doctors to get the Dormitory Access Card, then head through to the lobby.

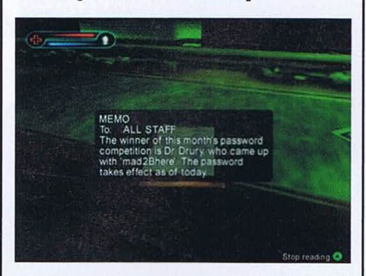
Use the distraction caused by the escaped loon to get past the two guards and go through the door on the far side of the statue. To get down to the far end of the corridor, you can go into the first cell and use the connecting vents to reach the one at the end of the row. In the last cell, use Telekinesis to target the CCTV Control

SECOND SIGHT

It's as though you know what'll happen…

BOOK, LINE AND SINKER

There's much to see and do in the hospital library…



A: If you read this clipboard you'll instantly learn the password for accessing the computer.



B: If you talk to the doctors, you'll be able to blag the computer password verbally, which makes for an amusing little exchange of words. (Make sure you approach them front-on to talk, otherwise you may grab them by mistake and give the game away!)



C: Read some of the books on the shelves and you'll get a small insight into the many forms of mental illness.



D: Once you have the password, use this computer to unlock the upstairs doors and find out where Jayne is being detained.

NGC TOP TIP

Climb up the watchtower, stand to the right at the top and use Telekinesis to target a mystery object in the asylum. It's the Outhouse Key, and it opens the portaloo in front of the asylum. There's a shotgun inside.

Room Key high on the wall and draw it towards yourself – by going through the door to the left at the main desk you'll be able to enter the CCTV Control Room and use the computer to disable the many security cameras.

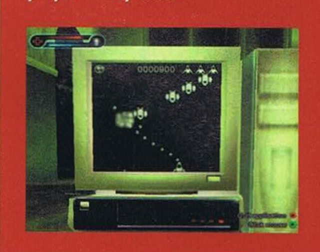
Use the computer on the main desk to get the new code for the security gates (a note posted to the wall by the side will tell you where it is) and proceed cautiously into the next ward. The security gates are to the left down the far end, but there's plenty of fun to be had before using them – such as visiting the cells and talking to patients and using the vent in the second cell on the right-hand row to reach a pool…

In the padded cell block upstairs, use Telekinesis to disable the three security cameras and cause mayhem by releasing the doors to the cells. The guards will be distracted by the commotion, allowing you to head to the security gates at the back of the block. Use Telekinesis on the control panel to open them, then stand by the next set of gates and Project yourself to activate the computer and unlock the gates. You have five seconds to head through before they close. This brings you to Jayne's cell.



SPACED INVADERS!

Head into the central storeroom in the padded cell block and you'll find some extra weapons. But that's not all you'll find in there. Look on the high shelf to see a computer disk and use Telekinesis to draw it towards you. Once you have it, take it to any computer and read it from the disk drive, then enjoy the X-Space '92 minigame. This will then be stored in the Applications folder on your Pause menu so you can play it at any time.



WIN! A NEW LCD TV

Do a Vattic to bag yourself a cool flat-screen television worth £500!



NGC readers love cosplay – we've yet to find a character you're not prepared to dress up as. The good people at Codemasters have cottoned on to this fact. They want you to bring John Vattic, hero of *Second Sight*, to life. So send us two photos of yourself, one where you're dressed as 'past' John in his coat and specs and one as 'captive' John in freakish straight-out-of-the-hospital guise.

Codemasters have the final say on the best transformation, so make it a good one! The first prize winner will bag themselves a DELL W1700 LCD TV – it's a wide aspect, HDTV-ready integrated flat-panelled monitor and TV tuner in one device. Five runners-up will each receive a copy of the game.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO: John D'oh! **NGC** Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

RULES: Open to UK residents only. No purchase is necessary. Employees of Future Publishing, or any of the companies involved in the competition or their agents or families are not permitted to enter the prize draw. Closing date Fri 29th October 2004. There is no cash alternative to the prizes. No correspondence will be entered into.

NEXT MONTH

In the next issue, we'll conclude our *Second Sight* walkthrough, unwrapping yet more tasty Easter eggs, funny moments and top tips to make Hanson and his cronies wish they'd never meddled in matters of the mind…



live the high-swinging life in..

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE 2

NGC GUARANTEE
WE CAN MAKE A HERO OUT OF ANYONE!



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

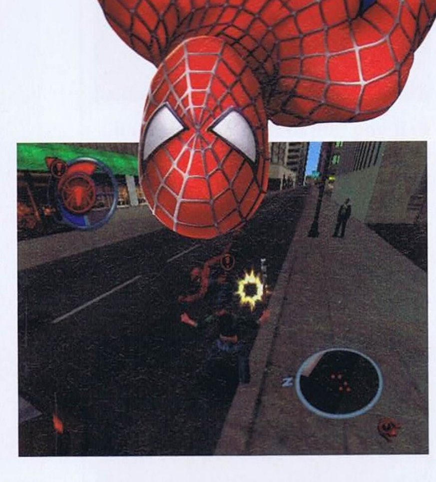
You've saved the city playing through the main part of the game, and now you're free to go about the day-to-day business of being a superhero, helping those in need.



THE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

So you've beaten Doc Ock, got the girl and saved the city. Sweet. But *Spider-Man 2* doesn't end there. Oh no. Chapter 16 has no objectives but to earn 50,000 Hero Points – nerk! However, this means you can just pootle around the city to your heart's content, which is arguably the most enjoyable element of *Spider-Man 2*; simply swinging between skyscrapers for the sheer hell of it. But! You'll probably want some tips on how to get those Hero Points, eh? And what the hell, we've also thrown in a guide to all the moves you can buy too. Ain't we just too cute for words? (Well, not Kittsy. Unless by 'cute' you mean 'bone chillingly scary'.)







WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 96!

The ability to whizz around a sprawling city helping those in need gives a marvellous sense of scope never seen in a licensed game like this, and even though it's often frustrating, you'll come back for more.



WORDS OF HELP

1. You can answer all the 'Citizens in Distress' missions (denoted by the green icons). Sadly, stopping carjackers, saving balloons and fighting muggers nets you minimum points and gets tedious quickly.
2. Your best bet to rack up points is to do the Mary Jane, Pizza and Photo missions



– we've detailed these later on in these pages. There are also the Challenges to take part in, which offer a *minimum* of 300 points depending on their difficulty. Finally, the Exploration tokens (consisting of Skyscraper, Buoy, Secret and Hideout tokens) offer a means to grab points. Basically, chapter 16 is about exploring and enjoying yourself.
3. The store has got some new items in for you to purchase – the level 7 Swing Speed upgrade, for a start, which you'll definitely need to beat some of the challenges and harsher time limits, plus the Movie Theatre and Fight Arena.
4. The Movie Theatre costs 1,000 Hero Points. Once bought, there's a 'change' icon outside the cinema – step into it to watch movies from the game.
5. The Fight Arena costs 5,000 Hero Points. Remember where you fought Shocker, in the dockside warehouse? Head there, go inside and enter the icon to get scrappin'. There are three types of round, although only the Timed round is available to begin with.
6. Timed rounds give you a set amount of time in which to beat your enemies. There's always a health icon on the overhead balcony. Completing the third round unlocks the Endurance rounds.
7. There's no time limit on the Endurance rounds, but there are no health power-ups either. Completing the third round opens up the Boss rounds.
8. The Boss rounds simply pit you against all the bosses in the game. Not much fun. You'll need a good portion of

UPGRADES

There are loads of enhancements Spidey can buy for his superpowers and fighting abilities. Lets take a look at 'em, eh?

MOVEMENT UPGRADES

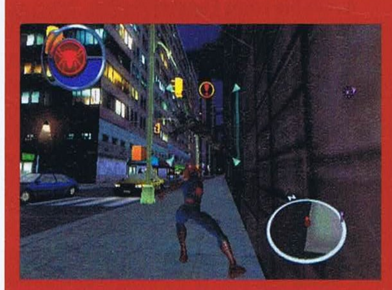
WALLSPRINT DURATION
Costs: 1,000 (level 1), 15,000 (level 2)
Available from Chapter 7
This lets Spidey run up walls for longer.

WEB ZIP
Costs: 10,000
Available from Chapter 3
Allows you to catapult yourself forward in a fairly straight and level line. Very useful and highly recommended.

SLINGSHOT JUMP
Costs: 6,000 Hero Points
Available from Chapter 3
With a web in each hand, Spidey can jump a huge distance, like when he catapults himself out of the window in the film.

AIR TRICK: INVERTED WIDOW
Costs: 250
Available from Chapter 4
While in the middle of a double jump, press Jump. Simple.

AIR TRICK: DADDY LONG LEGS
Costs: 250
Available from Chapter 8
A fancier version of the Inverted Widow air trick, which must be purchased before you can buy this one.





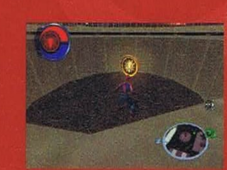
AIR TRICK: THE SPINNARET
Costs: 500
Available from Chapter 10
Press Jump thricely while double-jumping. You'll need Daddy Long Legs first.

AIR TRICK: THE ROLLING REPORTER
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 12
Got the Spinnaret? Then now you can get this. You guessed it; press Jump four times while double-jumping.

AIR TRICK: WEBTASTIC 360
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 14
You'll need Rolling Reporter and this requires you to hit Jump *five* times while double-jumping.

AIR TRICK: THE POISON PIKE
Costs: 2,000
Available from Chapter 15
Once you've got the Webtastic 360 you can have this. Guess what it does and how to do it. Go on.

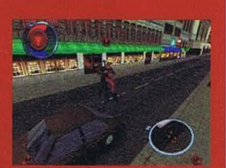
AIR TRICK: SUPER FLY SPIDER GUY
Costs: 250
Available from Chapter 4
Press Jump while you're falling for some excellent acrobatic action.

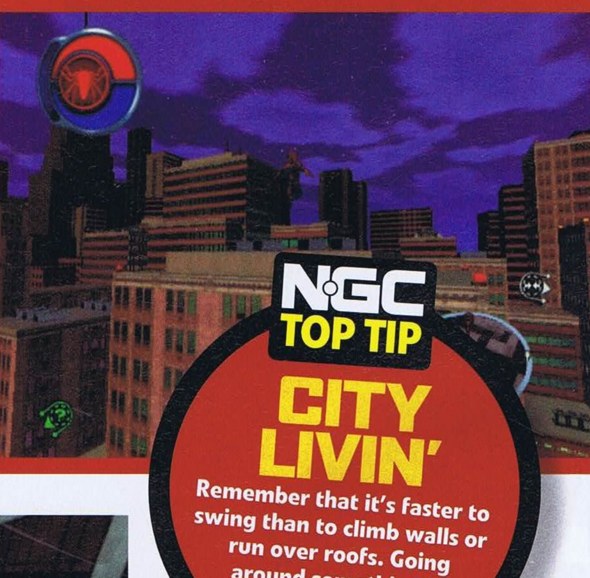


AIR TRICK: WEB FREAK TANGO
Costs: 250
Available from Chapter 8
You can only buy this fancy move once you've got the Super Fly Spider Guy (sheesh). Web Freak Tango is basically a fancier version of that.



AIR TRICK: MANHATTAN WEB ROLL
Costs: 500
Available from Chapter 10
Once you've acquired Web Freak Tango you can get this – press Jump three times while falling, this time, to pull off your special move.

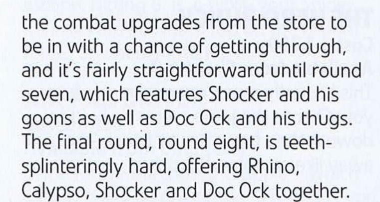




NGC TOP TIP

CITY LIVIN'

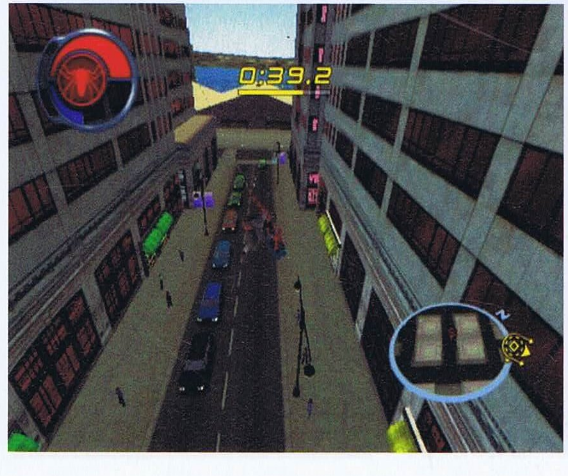
Remember that it's faster to swing than to climb walls or run over roofs. Going around something is the way to go.



the combat upgrades from the store to be in with a chance of getting through, and it's fairly straightforward until round seven, which features Shocker and his goons as well as Doc Ock and his thugs. The final round, round eight, is teeth-splinteringly hard, offering Rhino, Calypso, Shocker and Doc Ock together.

CHAPTER 17

Once you've got 50,000 Hero Points you'll open up chapter 17. The only thing that's special about it is that the store offers the level 8 Swing Speed upgrade, which costs – wait for it – 50,000 Hero Points. It's worth getting, however, as you won't be able to complete some of the challenges without it. You'll get the 'Speed Freak' award as soon as you've bought it.



NGC TOP TIP

DO THE FIST

Remember that a few of the upgrades are meant for escape – you'll need them to clear away enemies when low on health.



FIGHTING UPGRADES

GRAPPLE
Costs: 750
Available from Chapter 3
Very useful this. Hold Attack and Web to pull enemies towards you – pretty much essential for when Quentin Beck challenges you in the sports arena. The speccy little geek.

AIR JUMP-OFF KICK
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 4
While bashing a goon's brain in with an air combo, press Jump to gain some height. Nice.

CANNONBALL KICK
Costs: 500
Available from Chapter 4
Swing into a fight and press B while still swinging – you'll do a fancy swinging kick.

MULTI-WEB TIE UPGRADES
Costs: Level 1 1,500, Level 2 2,000, Level 3 2,000
Available from Chapter 4 (Chapters 7 and 9 for levels 2 and 3)
Basically this upgradable ability allows you to web tie more than one enemy – get the level 3 version, f'rinstance, and you can snag four goons. Press the Y button to web a baddie, then press and hold Y to hit others.

AIR COMBO UPGRADES
Costs: Level 3 1,000, Level 4 2,000
Available from Chapter 4 (Chapter 5 for level 4)
You know when you sprint towards an enemy and punch them, then leap into the air and smack them around above the ground? These upgrades allow you to pull off bigger combos while doing so, up to four hits.



RISING KNEE KICK
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 5
This knocks a baddie into the air, a little like the Air Combo but using your, er, knee. Press B, Y, A to do so.

YANK BEHIND
Costs: 500
Available from Chapter 5
Web enemies ahead of you and yank 'em backwards to hit ones creeping up behind you. B, Y and then Grab'll do it.

EARTH BREAKER PUNCH
Costs: 1,250
Available from Chapter 5
The equivalent of Link dive-bombing the ground with his sword in *Smash Bros* and *Soul Calibur*. Er, kind of. Y, B and A will let you smash the ground hard.

LAUNCH KICK
Costs: 750
Available from Chapter 5
After you've dodged an attack by hitting X (when Spidey's head flashes white), pressing B then A will let you counterattack by kicking your enemy into the air. No more than they deserve, eh?

DIZZY STRIKE
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 6
Press B twice then Grab to stun your target. Not the most interesting move but it's useful to buy yourself a little time.

THE HERO PUNCH
Costs: 1,250
Available from Chapter 7
This basically clears enemies away from you. Charge the jump meter by holding down A then press B – it'll knock 'em away like ninepins. Possibly.



SPIDER-MAN 2

Max out your spider-skills

NGC TOP TIP

FIGHT CLUB

The further you get, the cannier the enemies become – you'll need to dodge and counterattack to do any damage.

INTERCEPTOR KICK
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 8
Hit Y, B, Y, B and launch a long-range kick. Best used for getting enemies momentarily away from you or escaping a hairy 'rumble' (as Paul claims they call 'fighting' on the mean streets of Frome).

MULTI-WEB HAMMER
Costs: 1,500
Available from Chapter 9
Pressing B, B, then Y will let you smack a foe into the ground via your magic wrist-webs. Hitting Y additional times (up to six) will see more smashage.

JAW LAUNCHER
Costs: 1,000
Available from Chapter 9
More Air Combo action, really, although this does also make for a good method of escape. Hitting B, B, A while your Spider Reflexes are activated (Up on the D-pad) forces an enemy into the air.

AIR PILE DRIVER
Costs: 1,250
Available from Chapter 9
Once you've purchased Grapple – which should really be one of the first things you do – you can piledrive an enemy into the ground while grappling them in the air. Simply hit X while they're air-grappled.

DOUBLE HEEL KICK
Costs: 1,000
Available From Chapter 10
Once you've bought Dizzy Strike you can buy this move. B, B, X, B allows you to make a heel kick. Unremarkable for a man bitten by a RADIOACTIVE SPIDER. Sheesh.

STAIR STEP KICKS COMBO
Costs: 1,250
Available from Chapter 10
Once Spider Reflexes are activated, B, B, A, B will allow you to unleash a flurry of spider-kicks (presumably) on a hapless goon. You'll need Jaw Launcher first.

WHIRLWIND KICK
Costs: 3,000
Available from Chapter 10
After dodging an attack, press B twice to do a kick that'll clear the area by knocking enemies all over the proverbial shop. Expensive but simple and very useful.

AIR WEB SLAM
Costs: 1,500
Available from Chapter 10
Again, you'll need Grapple for this. Not a problem, right? No. Of course not. While grappling an enemy in the air you can flip them with a web by hitting Y. Fancy-pants stuff rather than devastatingly useful.

WEB HANGER
Costs: 2,500
Available from Chapter 11
Great fun this, although it's more dramatic than effective. When you've knocked an enemy unconscious, hit B, B, Y, A to string the offending perp up from a lamppost. Go Spidey! Cough.



SUPER WEB
Costs: 2,500
Available from Chapter 11
Disable enemies at a stroke, without even having to punch 'em hard in the face, by pressing Y, B, Y, Y to smother them in an enormous web. Reminds us of a nightmare we once had involving granny's shawl. But that's another story for another day.

RISING SHOULDER CHARGE
Costs: 2,500
Available from Chapter 13
Sprint with a fully-charged jump meter at an enemy, then press B to knock them away and get up in the air. Yes.

SPIDER MISSILE
Costs: 1,500
Available from Chapter 13
While running up a wall (known as 'wallsprinting' to snotty superhero types) or wall-jumping, simply press B and you'll home in like a man-shaped, er, spider missile. Obvious, really. Um.

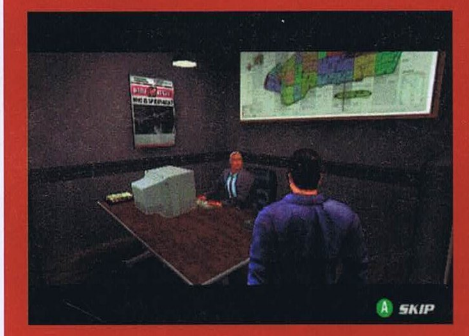








PHOTO MISSIONS



Friendly old Robbie Robertson at the Daily Bugle will give you these Hero Point-earning missions, although quite how he expects poor old Peter Parker to take these photos without, er, being Spider-Man and being able to stick to walls is a mystery. Perhaps avuncular old Robbie really wants Peter dead and this a roundabout way of trying to kill him. Hmm. We could be onto something there. Or maybe not.

Anyhow, remember that you'll need the later Swing Speed upgrades in order to complete some of the later missions.

PHOTO MISSION 1
750 points
Time Limit: 2:30
Five photos required.
This one's dead easy; you just have to photograph the art gallery. The tokens aren't hard to find, some scattered liberally around the street with above buildings in the area.

PHOTO MISSION 2
1,000 points
Time Limit: 2:20
Six photos required.
Remember the sports arena where you fought hopeless twit Quentin Beck? Go there. Most of the tokens are high above. Luckily, you can climb up sheer surfaces like a… spider. Clever.

PHOTO MISSION 3
1,250 points
Time limit: 2:35
Seven photos required.
It's the library you want this time. It's got books in it. Not that you can check any out. Pah.

PHOTO MISSION 4
1,500 points
Time limit: 3:50
Nine photos required.
The large construction site is your destination this time. A few photos will need to be taken from above, such as from some of the vertical beams, although one is required from inside the lift shaft. Odd. Still, it pays the rent, eh?

PHOTO MISSION 5
1,750 points
Time limit: 4:40
Ten photos required.
This mission takes you to the financial district where there are lots of lovely skyscrapers to swing around – predictably, the final four tokens are on top of the four tallest buildings. The first six are grouped fairly close together.









PHOTO MISSION 6
2,000 points
Time limit: 4:14
Eleven photos required.
Head to Central Park. You can't miss it. It's a big, er, park. A large green area. That's the one. Most tokens are actually in the park, which can be a pain as swinging can be hit and miss unless you stick to the tallest trees, but don't forget to check some of the adjacent buildings.

PHOTO MISSION 7
2,250 points
Time limit: 4:20
Twelve photos required.
Go to the tallest skyscraper in Midtown. None of the tokens should give you much trouble apart from one. The hardest token here is above the spire; very high up, that.

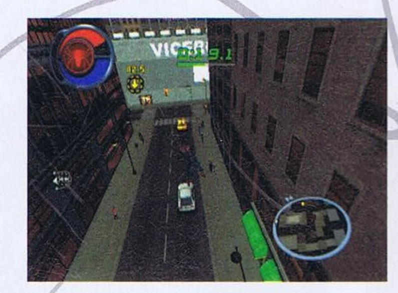
PHOTO MISSION 8
2,500 points
Time limit: 4:25
Thirteen photos required.
Nasty, nasty, nasty. You'll need to take photos from both above and below the Queensboro bridge. If you've done the chapter where you have to follow Black Cat underneath it you might find this marginally easier. To top it all off there's even a token on a buoy. Gah.

PHOTO MISSION 9
2,750 points
Time limit: 4:20
Fourteen photos required.
Just like when you were saving Aunt May from the train or fighting Doc Ock, navigating the train tracks here is a royal pain in the fundament, and falling to the ground 'sucks ass', as Geraint says after a sherbet or two.

PHOTO MISSION 10
3,000 points
Time limit: 4:10
Fifteen photos required.
Really hard, this. *Reeeeaaaally* hard, not least because once again you've got to get underneath the Queensboro bridge. If you can get to the first token in about a minute then you might be okay for the rest of the mission; the Buoy tokens make life more difficult, mind.

MARY JANE MISSIONS

After you've gone to Mary Jane's apartment in Chapter 6 like a filthy spider-perv, you can head back there at any time to do Mary Jane missions. These are very simple race-to-a-destination objectives, but they're nonetheless a darn good way of accruing a decent amount of Hero Points quickly. You'll need to find a 'Change' marker at each destination and turn back into Peter Parker before you run out of time.



MARY JANE MISSION 1
600 points
Time limit: 0:40
You need to get to the movie theatre for this gentle introductory mission. Head north and then east to get to it – you'll find the 'Change' icon behind the cinema.

MARY JANE MISSION 2
800 points
Time limit: 0:50
It's off to the restaurant for a romantic meal for two – or probably not, knowing fate's habit of throwing steaming metaphorical piles of dung in poor Peter Parker's face. It's pretty much directly east from Mary Jane's 'pad', man.

MARY JANE MISSION 3
1,000 points
Time limit: 0:35
You'll need to find the boutique this time. Up north there's a multi-levelled building (how much easier this'd be if every building had a name, eh?) – the Change icon is around the middle somewhere.



MARY JANE MISSION 4
1,200 points
Time limit: 0:35
The theatre is your destination now. (If you've seen the film, you'll know that MJ stars in The Importance of Being Earnest.) It's directly north, pretty much, and you can find the Change icon in the alley.

MARY JANE MISSION 5
1,400 points
Time limit: 1:05
You'll need to get to the park – but not Central Park. There's another, smaller park near one of the waterfronts on the Lower West Side (check your map – it'll be the smaller green space…). There's an alley by the park with the Change icon.

MARY JANE MISSION 6
1,600 points
Time limit: 1:02
What's the sexiest, most romantic place to take a girl? Yes, the museum, only just edged out by the library. Anyhow, it's just off Central Park. Can't miss it. Especially not with the helpful map you've got.







AWARDS

Achieving certain criteria in the game grants you awards. Unless you're some kind of insane completist who just *has* to get everything the game has to offer there's no real incentive to grab them. That said, if you're after Hero Points, an award could net you just the number you need to buy a crucial upgrade.

If you're trying to collect the elusive 50,000 to open up Chapter 17, or if you're wondering whether there's any point at all to getting all the Hint icons, you might want to know exactly what you'll get for each task. So here's a list to help. Enjoy!

Award	How you get it	Hero Points
Employee of the month	All Pizza Deliveries	250
Shutterbug	**All Photo Missions**	**250**
Knowledge Seeker	All Hint icons	250
Silver Medallist	**Beat all challenges**	**2,000**
Gold Medallist	Beat all challenge Mega Times	5,000
Drenched Explorer	**All Buoy tokens**	**500**
Watchful Explorer	All Secret tokens	2,000
Towering Explorer	**All Skyscraper tokens**	**500**
Vigilant Explorer	All Hideout tokens	1,000
Master Explorer	**All Exploration tokens**	**2,000**
Friend To Children	Rescue 25 balloons	250
Peace Maker	**Prevent 25 gang wars**	**250**
Bane of Petty Thieves	Prevent 25 purse snatches	250
Thug Mugger	**Prevent 25 muggings**	**250**
Watch Dog	Prevent 25 break-ins	250
Anger Manager	**Stop 25 road rages**	**250**
Stick-Up Artist	Stop 25 robberies	250
Party Crasher	**Stop 25 Battles Royal**	**250**
Lifter of Spirits	Rescue 25 hanging workmen	250
Sucker	**Stop 25 ambushes**	**250**
Automobile Avenger	Stop 25 carjackings	250
Life Preserver	**Rescue all civilians from 25 boats**	**250**
Human Ambulance	Get 25 injured civilians to hospital	250
Honorary Deputy	**Complete 25 officer assists**	**250**
Crime Stopper	Stop 250 petty crimes	250
Good Samaritan	**Help 250 citizens in distress**	**250**
Champ	Defeat 200 enemies	250
Mega Champ	**Defeat 500 enemies**	**250**
Big Game Hunter	Beat Rhino	250
Alien Buster	**Beat Mysterio**	**250**
Shock Absorber	Beat Shocker	250
Tentacle Wrangler	**Beat Doc Ock**	**250**
Speed Freak	Get Max Swing Speed	250
Lover Not A Fighter	**Complete all Mary Jane missions**	**250**
Hero In Training	Get 15,000 Hero Points	250
Hero	**Get 45,000 Hero Points**	**250**
Super Hero	Get 100,000 Hero Points	250
Mega Hero	**Get 200,000 Hero Points**	**250**
Game Master	Complete everything in the game	250 (Stingy!)



THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA



PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME

UNLOCK THE ORIGINAL POP

When you get your first new sword in the game, you'll be able to unlock the original *Prince of Persia*. After collecting the sword you go into a wide-open cellar. Right at the end of it there's a rotating switch. Turn it 90º (quarter of the way round) once and it opens the gate. Turn it another 90º so it points at a wall. Now whack the wall three times and it'll collapse, allowing you to play *PoP*.

MARIO VS DONKEY KONG

CROWN TROPHIES

Complete the following tasks to win the crown trophies.

Bronze crown
Get all the stars in a world.

Silver crown
Get all the stars in two worlds.

Gold crown
Get all the presents on the Expert levels.

UNLOCKABLE MOVIES

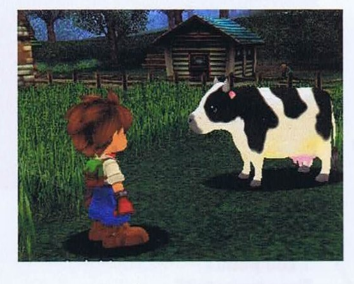
These appear on the Visual Options menu once you've unlocked them.

1 Begin a new game
2 Begin a new game
3 Reach the first world boss
4 Beat the first world boss
5 Start Plus world (after completing the main game)
6 Reach the boss of Plus world
7 Beat the boss of Plus world
8 Beat the boss of Plus world

EXPERT LEVELS

Unlock the expert world by beating the first world, then unlock more levels by collecting stars. Collect all the presents in the first 10 worlds.

Level X-1	nine stars
Level X-2	18 stars
Level X-3	27 stars
Level X-4	36 stars
Level X-5	45 stars
Level X-6	54 stars
Level X-7	63 stars
Level X-8	72 stars
Level X-9	81 stars
Level X-10	90 stars



HARVEST MOON: A WONDERFUL LIFE

TREE UPGRADE

You need access to Tartan for this. First, hybridise a crop seed (not a crop!) with an Upseed flower to make an S-rank seed. Now create another hybrid by putting the B-ranked tree seed in the first hybrid slot and your upgraded crop seed in the second hybrid slot. Tartan should do his funny little dance and produce an S-rank tree seed for you.

EASY RECIPE

Mix an Egg, Milk and a crop together to produce an easy recipe. If you're using grapes or melon, choose Hors D'Oeuvres as the recipe type, and if you're using a dhibe, carrot, peach, sweet potato, strawberry or tomato, make sure you choose Dessert for the recipe type.



Fed up of the wild dog biting your cows in Harvest Moon: FoMT? Use lumber from your shed to build a pen on your field and keep your cows there. Use a rock or log as a 'door' so you can move them inside when it rains.
Bill Gray, Bath

SAMURAI JACK THE SHADOW OF AKU

FREEBIES

Hold the left stick up and the right stick down and press A, X, B, Y to obtain the following things: Crystal sword; Electric Elemental sword; Fire Elemental sword; refill Health meter; refill Zen meter

WHEN HENS ATTACK

Remember how Link used to be able to infuriate Cuccos until they came to peck him to bits? Jack's got the same ability. When you get to the first town, run after one of the chickens pecking about and swipe at it with your sword. The little clucker will turn into a monster chicken and attack you.





READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

Can you out-tip Tips Extra? Send in your hint-tastic helps and we'll 'sort out' the top tipster with a mystery prize from Geraint's 'special drawer'. Chances are, it'll be a game.



1. HARVEST MOON AWL

Cloudbusting

If the weather's not to your liking, watch the weather report on the telly. Turn it off, then on again and keep doing this until you get the weather you want. Going into the mine when it's raining stops the rain, too.
Chris Bowman, Edinburgh

2. METROID ZERO MISSION (GBA)

So solid screw

You can get the screw attack early – before or after beating Ridley. After you've got the high jump boots, go to the room where you obtained the boots and roll below it. If you don't have a speedbooster bomb, jump up and left from the platform below the speed blocks.
Stephen Newell, County Down

3. POKÉMON CHANNEL

Squirtle power!

Don't want to wait 24 hours for your order from Shop'n'Squirtle? Turn your GC off, switch it on again and set the calendar to the next day. Now load your game and your stuff will be delivered.
Serian Lloyd, Ammanford

4. MARIO KART: DD

Banana hunch

If you're about to be struck by lightning (clouds are forming over your kart), try to hit a banana or other on-course obstacle. You won't be hit by lightning as you spin out.
Harry Shukman, Oxford

5. ZELDA: OOT

Darklife

It's hard to beat Dark Link in the water temple if you're low on hearts. If you've plenty of magic, though, use Din's Fire a few times.
Mike Aitken, Morcambe

6. METROID PRIME

Greedy Samus

In the mines, go to the ventilation shaft and stand just outside the green gas. Shoot the puffers coming from the roof and use the charge beam to collect the pickups.
Tim Moule, March

7. METAL GEAR SOLID

Slaymores

If you're having trouble timing the C4 charge explosions during the second fight with Raven, try using Claymores. Just be careful not to trip them yourself.
Jamie Jones, Littlehampton

8. MARIO ADVANCE 4 (GBA)

Who are you?

In single-player mode, go to the *SMA4/SMB* selection screen. Run up and down so Mario goes off screen. Stop pressing on Up and Mario will be carrying a shell, stop on Down and you'll be Luigi. Unfortunately this has no effect on the game…
Oliver Freeborn, London

9. SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Ship avoid

On Bianco Hills Shine six, head up the windmill. When the logs are in sight, jump and use your FLUDD to reach the obstacle course, missing the stupid boat things.
Jamie Freyne, Broxburn

10. MARIO ADVANCE 4 (GBA)

Pipe dream

On the second level of world one, there are pipes spitting out Goombas. Change to Raccoon Mario and find one. Wait until the pipe spits out three Goombas, then jump as you hit it. Tap jump to hover down, and keep bouncing on the Goombas. Don't touch the floor and you will keep earning lives.
Harvinder Sogi, Smethwick





He'll solve your problems – in exchange for your soul.

Dr Kitts,
In *Skies of Arcadia Legends* there's a side quest with a mother in Moramba and her long-lost daughter in Esperanza. I've got as far as giving the mother the first Kabal skewer. Now I need to return to Esperanza to get the ingredients for a nice tasty one. What are the three things I need?
Harry Shukman, Oxford

Dr Kitts gets a cosy glow as he thinks of skewering…
The items you need are Khale, Gentum and Kabal. You should have the Khale – it's from the Spice Island Discovery. Go to Gordo's Bistro to learn about the other two ingredients, and you should be given some Khale while you're there. The owner of the item shop in Nasrad will be able to sell you the final item on your list, the Gentum.

Dr Kitts,
I'm stuck on the quest for the Carpe Retractum spellbook in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. How do I freeze all the switches to get past the puzzle?
Brett Crease, London

Dr Kitts always hopes the Dementors will win…
You might not be swapping effectively between characters – Hermione's the only one with the Glacius spell, so use her to freeze a switch, then take control of Harry and grab it. Next, as Hermione again, freeze another switch and this time make Ron grab it. Finally, Hermione can freeze the third switch herself and grab it.

Dr Kitts,
I get the impression that you like to kill things. So help me out. How would you go about killing the Subterranean Emperor Hydra from *Serious Sam*?
Jamie Marksson, Wolverhampton

Dr Kitts sticks his stethoscope in the freezer…
I'd use something heavy-duty like the Rocket Launcher (plus Sonic Rockets) or the SBC Cannon. The dragon head appears a little while after the other two, but that's the one you should kill first because it spits horribly damaging fireballs, so blast away at the others until the dragon head pops out of the lava, then focus all your attention on that one. Of course, shoot the others if they get in your way, but try to take out the dragon head.

The blue laser-spitting head is your next target. (You may have noticed that you got 50,000 points for killing the dragon head. You get this for each head you kill.) Finally, take out the last one, which you should be able to finish off with a lightweight weapon if you've weakened it enough.

CODE BANK

Got an Action Replay? Then go nuts with these codes…

MARIO GOLF: TOADSTOOL TOUR

Master code
X1J9-3AMY-75XK7
R9YP-7543-XD1NJ
4TD2-M7AJ-ZMTB3
PJWJ-NUDZ-3N1FR

Unlock all golfers
KDW5-8T8W-8XVZN
EEJQ-TJ90-TCDMB

All normal tours/courses
R2TT-KR0R-W8Z89
J793-FE4A-7P504

Allow duplicate characters
8YET-3RG2-4W6VG
WRBP-TM3K-G1MUJ
GTJF-CARM-JXEYK
3C4X-P2YT-UB8X8

Player 1
Always on first shot
XMMY-12MK-RPG8H
PMWB-EV3W-000J7

Infinite power shots
NGT8-GE37-MT9VQ
P42J-XHT9-6W18U

No mulligans
ZPYB-UTB2-ZDNRA
CDBK-EVN6-EZY25

Player 2
Always on first shot
056H-25YA-M0YAB
EKUM-B40J-FUV50

Infinite power shots
4DZ2-4AQN-C3VWD
FU5G-23W1-JKQD8

No mulligans
17ZH-560H-NJ0CY
N2V3-EWAZ-JHP06

Player 3
Always on first shot
EGVA-ZV0G-G3VV4
9RNK-DVJE-0885M

Infinite power shots
GV8D-GWYP-JAXBB
2KMT-1TW3-ADT9R

No mulligans
UHKP-M9T7-3Q41E
7Y56-NYBU-K43DK

Player 4
Always on first shot
7AK5-5TND-3HHKJ
UG00-BK15-R2RD8

Have infinite
power shots
H2XV-U1ZF-9BCKY
F2T0-46GD-39R1M

No mulligans
NRN8-5247-UGF5J
D40V-BF4Z-Q11CU

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE 2

Master code
VP69-2CGW-2U7TX
8TJN-W1QU-Z4YYQ

Infinite Health
4P1U-ETC4-6NUN3
N0R8-Q52J-HR5NC

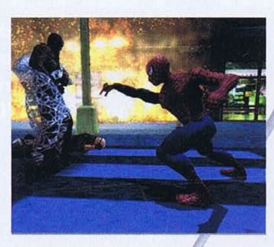
Infinite Hero meter
5ZWA-RH7B-CAVU7
7UHM-MTBP-TR5J6
ETR4-ZUQU-5FGUF

Moon jump (Hold the
A button)
EHAP-YT21-T6BPJ
UEPC-JM8V-XRAZW
PJZ0-Y2CW-V7QPR

Hero Points (test)
73FZ-WPD4-J0126
QXTQ-MD7C-387FD
5Y1R-7PWV-8NU2R
PFEE-7FNM-W8N21

Web Zip
3XA0-ZUVR-NCBCX
CGPT-C8WG-FU1HM

All combat upgrades
JK8E-K1RQ-WXYNP
HC6R-AD8C-MGZZZ
0PWM-4KTW-RG5BV
W1X7-JCHT-NTQDG



Wallsprint
3W16-H2AJ-ZUHUQ
NVZ0-QGB2-DPWUU

Air Jump Off Kick
6RJ7-J3YY-P7QDC
VTB6-G2A6-EQ349

Cannonball Kick
5A94-6KPR-HCJYE
EVBD-UB8V-Y4WY9

Rising Knee Kick
Q0F4-R8YC-R8JMK
57V9-WWX1-M1R38

Yank Behind
YZ8Y-5TW5-0F47C
A472-U3CW-X0XHU

Earth Breaker Punch
EYPK-WGEK-YQEJ0
XMMT-QMPE-661ND

Level 3 Air Combo
TZ3R-2646-P9N60
AR4E-NY4N-PZV5P

Launch Kick
DWB9-MQMW-WHNKE
HZ0U-U42H-2G95N

Dizzy Strike
UKGU-4AKE-FMW39
2136-NW5R-5ZW3R

Multi Web Hammer
EVMQ-J5KY-K9J0T
QBJT-ZYN6-M2AGA

The Hero Punch
MUV7-M9ZD-KQ8F0
1J91-PAV4-PT5VA

Interceptor Kick
1GTV-WUYE-426F0
TFBH-H6MV-X7TTG

Level 4 Air Combo
53KR-A8W1-8GXX3
GUJ0-MT50-11J9Z

Jaw Launcher
7U0M-BR5N-YZBGW
BBZY-9RCK-DNJH5

Air Pile Drive
6EJZ-J40J-53ET8
HMTU-K3F3-EZB7N

Double
Heel Kick
9UZM-BAYD-H9D3W
48FQ-0W7F-CKQNF

Stair Step
Kicks Combo
ZNY3-NA7E-B36HX
Z72V-6J1J-GK02E

Super Web
3HY3-E9KJ-X8BC3
60T1-W2DP-T56RT

Rising Shoulder
Charge
59J3-HWD6-G37T8
V2YQ-UKB7-70C9V

Whirlwind Kick
E8VU-351Y-EPJFR
KJXE-T4FG-1C2NJ

Air Web Slam
2EHW-FP9X-9GR52
1NM9-4AR9-D0BV7

Spider Missile
CCUF-Y5MH-0FEPW
QW1F-U4K2-GP569

Grapple
1X11-V1DK-CC72M
W1X7-JCHT-NTQDG

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AR ACTION REPLAY
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AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

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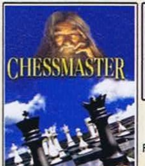
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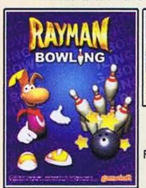
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For Mobile Phones: BDEFIJKL PRUVWXY

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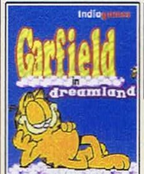
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For Mobile Phones: ABDEFIMP QRVWXZ

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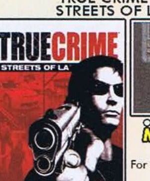
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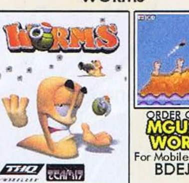
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The secret to good sex can now be found in your pocket. Press the buttons a few times, and find out how to press hers.

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ORDER CODE: MGU271 WORMS
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Creepy crawly warfare comes to your mobile. Can you lead your squad of armed annelids to victory.

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Get in the cockpit and place your hand firmly on the joystick, as you aim to rule the skies.

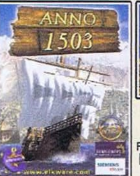
GOLF CLUB



ORDER CODE: MGU271 CLUB
For Mobile Phones: DEFGH IJKLUY

Face 18 holes in the most advanced Java golf game yet. With 3D views, weather, solo, competition & multiplayer modes.

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ORDER CODE: MGU271 ANNO
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Enter the world of the stratgey hit Anno 1503. Become a pirate or explorer and embark on the adventure of your life.

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Control the movement of time and save the day in this classic platform adventure.

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For Mobile Phones: BDEFIJKL PUWXY

Ride your high-powered racing machine to the top of the podium on a number of realistic circuits.

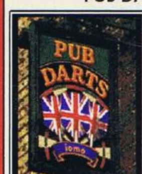
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ORDER CODE: MGU271 GAMES
For Mobile Phones: BDEF JKU

Go for gold in seven track and field events: Hurdles, Long Jump, High Jump, 100m Dash, Discus, Shot Put & Javelin.

PUB DARTS



ORDER CODE: MGU271 180
For Mobile Phones: DEFHIJK LTUWXY

Step up to the oche and test out your darts skills. Have you got what it takes to score 180?

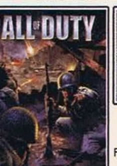
SOLITAIRE

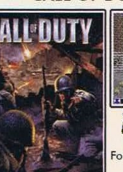


ORDER CODE: MGU271 SOL
For Mobile Phones: ABCDEFI NOTVWX

The cards are on the table, and it's up to you to take them all off again. Can you deal?

CALL OF DUTY





ORDER CODE: MGU271 COD
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Make your country proud by killing the enemy menace, in this exciting World War II game.

TOM CLANCY'S® SPLINTER CELL



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As Sam Fisher, you'll have to use all your skill to take down the terrorists, just don't get caught.

XIII



ORDER CODE: MGU271 XIII
For Mobile Phones: BDEFIJKL UVWXY

Stop the terrorists and solve your own personal identity crisis, in this high action shooter.

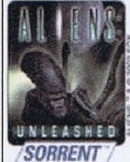
BABE O MANIA



ORDER CODE: MGU271 MANIA
For Mobile Phones: DEUWX

What happens when noughts & crosses becomes strip-tac-toe? Never before has getting XXX been so appropriate.

ALIENS™ UNLEASHED



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While training against synthetic ALIENS, the synths malfunction, and your fight to stay alive begins!

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Van Helsing is sent on what could be the mission in which he discovers the truth about himself, his past, and his fate.!

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ORDER CODE: MGU271 ONEDAY
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Bat your way to victory, it's one day cricket at its best. All the thrills and excitement of cricket on your mobile.

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An amazing fruit machine simulator - giving you the thrill of gambling without losing your shirt.

BLOCK BREAKER DELUXE

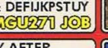
ORDER CODE: MGU271 BLOCK
For Mobile Phones: ABCDEFIJ KOUVWXY

Destroy all the blocks through 30 levels of intense arcade action. Loads of features.

SPEED DEVILS — For Mobile Phones: ABDEFNOY — Order Code: MGU271 SPEED

MINISTRY OF SOUND™ DANCE NATION — For Phones: BDEJKLPUWXY — Code: MGU271 DANCE

PUB POOL — For Mobile Phones: DEFGJKUWXY — Order Code: MGU271 POOL



THE ITALIAN JOB — For Mobile Phones: DEFIJKPSTUY — Order Code: MGU271 JOB

SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY — For Mobile Phones: BDEFJUY — Code: MGU271 SPHINX

SKATE & SLAM™ — For Phones: ABDEFJKLNOTUY — Order Code: MGU271 SK8

RAYMAN® 3 — For Phones: BDEFJKLUVWXY — Order Code: MGU271 RAY3

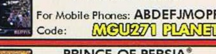
SHARK HUNT — For Mobile Phones: BDEFJKU — Code: MGU271 SHARK

VAMPIRE BLOODLINE — For Mobile Phones: BDEFIJTU — Order Code: MGU271 VAMP



THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW — For Phones: BDEFIJKUWXY — Order Code: MGU271 TOM

SPLASHDOWN™ RIDES GONE WILD — For Mobile Phones: BDEFJKLUY — Code: MGU271 SPLASH



PLANET ZERO — For Mobile Phones: ABDEFJMOPR — Code: MGU271 PLANET

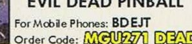
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ATARI® ASTEROIDS® — For Phones: ABCDEOPTUW — Order Code: MGU271 ASTER

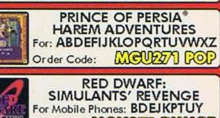
MX UNLEASHED™ — For Mobile Phones: BEFJY — Order Code: MGU271 MX



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EVIL DEAD PINBALL — For Mobile Phones: BDEJT — Order Code: MGU271 DEAD



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ALIEN STORM — For Phones: ABDEJKOTUW — Order Code: MGU271 STORM

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This message will be charged at your standard rate. You will then receive two billing messages and a service/browser message with the link to your game

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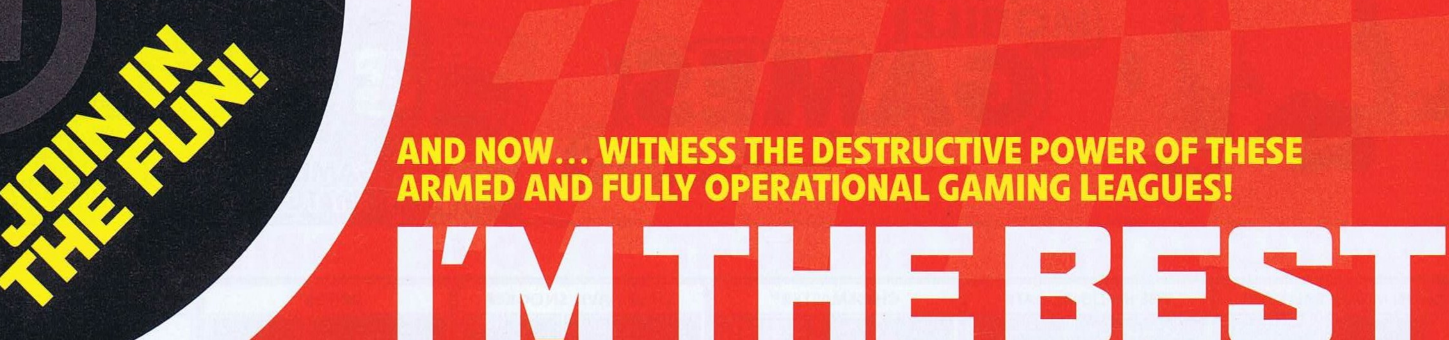


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3650	E	GX10	J	V600	U
3650	E	GX10i	J	**SONY ERICSSON**	
5100	D	GX20	K	T610	W
6100	D	GX30	L	T630	V
6310i	C	**SIEMENS**		Z600	X
6600	F	C55	N	**SAGEM**	
6610	D	C60	M	My V65	Y
6800	D	M50	O	**LG**	
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I'M THE BEST

WIN!

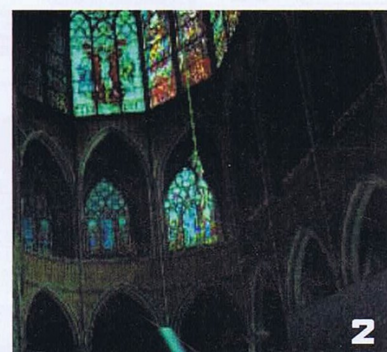
Only a couple of months left to go now until the end of I'm The Best. Have you entered yet? We'll be handing out bonuses after the final round, just as we have after all the others. Place first in a mini-table to get 50 points, place second for 40 and so on. The more mini-tables you get on, the more bonus points you'll get – and that can give your score a serious boost!

You can still email us your photographic evidence – send it to ngc@futurenet.co.uk with ITB: in the subject line, and don't forget to include your name. Video evidence can be sent to the usual **NGC** postal address.

We want something else from you, though: we've had loads of fun watching how well everyone did at I'm The Best, and we'd like your suggestions for the replacement. We've got some great ideas already, but you may well have an even better one. (Don't be modest, you might.) Would you like shorter challenges for single games, like our *Mario Kart* Championship? Does the thought of the return of Skill Club make you reach for your joypad? Or would you like to wave goodbye to games and read a six-page feature on Geraint's sock drawer? Whatever you want, we want to hear about it, so get writing!

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE!

Mission Impossible is the part of I'm The Best where we make you put down your controller and think for a little while – a novel idea, but it seems to work. We could show you a bunch of pixels and ask you which game they're taken from. We could give you some speech from a game and ask you to name it. Whatever we do, though, you can be sure that it's a thorough test of your Nintendo gaming knowledge. And there's a new one to have a go at every issue, so if you can't do one month's, try again a month later.

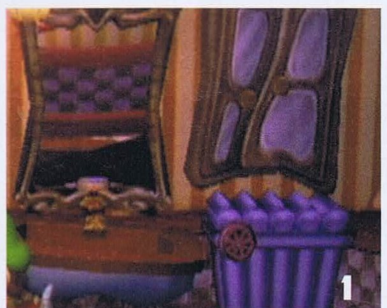

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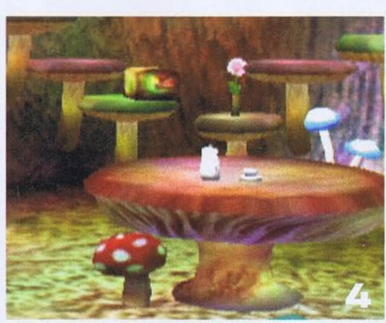
THIS MONTH… THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home. But who lives in these houses? And will they ever appear on Home Front? We only want you to answer the first of those questions and tell us the name of the person who owns or lives in each house.

Send all four names by 6th October please. Completely correct answers will net the sender 40 points.

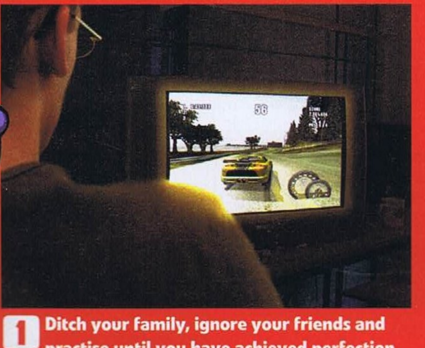

3



1


4

BEAT THE BEST!

Come and have a go if you think they're hard enough! This is how you turn your talent into a shot at a stonking prize.



1 Ditch your family, ignore your friends and practise until you have achieved perfection. But not beyond the cut-off date. That'd be dim.



2 Get a score above our 'To Qualify' minimum – you don't have to beat the top 5. Gather the evidence (video/photo) and send it to us.



3 Wait an issue or two and see where your score gets you. The more challenges you nail, the higher you climb in the table…

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE





KIRBY'S REVENGE

WE WANT Your highest numbers of KOs.
THE LAW Play in Cruel Melee mode. You must play as Kirby. All default settings apply otherwise.
TO QUALIFY Four Knock Outs.
EVIDENCE Photographic evidence will do fine.
POINTS 25

1	15	**David Lent**, Leeds; **A. Chan Wai Kuen**, Malv. Wells
2	11	**Rob Jones**, Poole
3	10	**Chris Mills**, Warrington; **S. Brooks**, Broughton Astley
4	9	**Rex McGee, Marcus Tse, Dave Every, Ben Bryce**
5	7	**Ben Claxton**, Essex

ROCK ME, AMADEUS

WE WANT Your highest score in All-Star mode.
THE LAW Must use Falco. Singing in an '80s-stylee completely optional.
TO QUALIFY 400,000
EVIDENCE Again, we're fine with photos for this one, as long as it's clear enough for us to see your score.
POINTS 20

1	1,240,100	**David Cathrine**, Edinburgh
2	1,154,700	**Adam Butcher**, Essex
3	1,083,600	**Kieron Harman**, Torquay
4	982,100	**Steve Brooks**, Broughton Astley
5	930,900	**Alan Chan Wai Kuen**, Malvern Wells

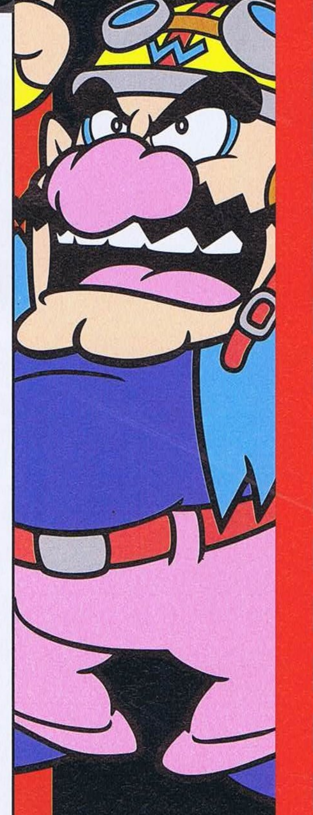
To spice things up a bit, you'll notice that we've also included extra Random Challenges – which can be related to games, or be completely whimsical. Again, fulfil our wishes to the letter and points will be yours. Simple. There's even a Spot the Ball competition (it's *Pikmin* this month, and there's not an actual ball). Keray-zee…

VIRTUAL REALITY YOU!

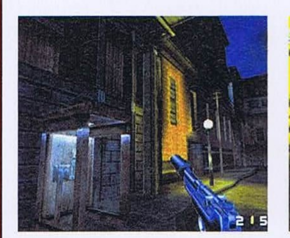
Because prats win prizes!

THIS MONTH WARIO WEAR

Start eating those pies, because this month's challenge is a portly pile of pleasure. **Yes, you've got to dress up as the purple-nosed anti-Wario. We want to see the pink trousers, the hat and the purple nose.** All photos must arrive by 6th October.



TIMESPLITTERS 2





BRICKATHON

WE WANT Your fastest time for completing the Bricking It: Glass Smash.
THE LAW You'll find it in Challenge mode. No cheating.
TO QUALIFY 25s
EVIDENCE Video of the entire run so we can see you doing it.
POINTS 25

1	18.8	**Bryan Docherty**, Inverkip
2	19.0	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel
3	20.0	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
4	21.0	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**, Milton Keynes
5	22.7	**Andrew Grieve**, Rotherham

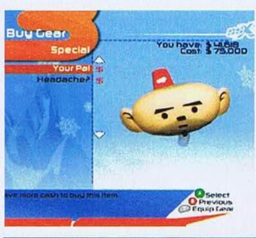
IRREPRESSIBLE!

WE WANT You to complete Banana Chomp: Playing With Fire.
THE LAW You have to complete the level.
TO QUALIFY 20 bananas
EVIDENCE Full video evidence of the entire run so we can see you don't duck out halfway.
POINTS 35

1	26	**Ben Bryce, Andrew Grieve, Peter Bottomley, Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**
2	25	**Matthew Reynolds**
3	24	**Simon Flatman, Rex McGee, Dave Pugh, Josh Symons, Dave Every, David Lent, Stephen Limm, Martijn Heule**
4	22	**Dermot Ryan, Dom Stroud**
5	20	**Chris Fletcher**

SSX3





MILLIONAIRE

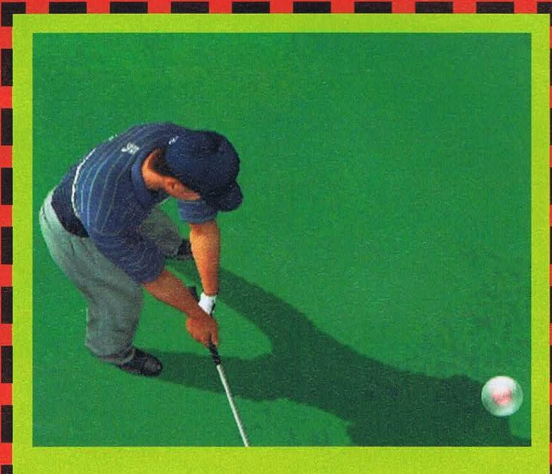
WE WANT Your best score for Peak 3.
THE LAW Must be done in Freestyle mode (All Peak Jam). Can use any of the starting boarders – no unlockable or created ones.
TO QUALIFY 1,000,000
EVIDENCE A photo will do for this.
POINTS 25

1	3,260,182	**Dermot Ryan**, Mullingar
2	3,011,057	**Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden
3	2,190,028	**Dave Every**, Ellesmere Port
4	2,091,290	**Steve Brooks**, Broughton Astley
5	1,603,806	**David Lent**, Leeds

WITH JAM ON

WE WANT Your fastest time on Peak 1 Race: Snow Jam.
THE LAW Must use Kaori – no other boarders allowed. You must cross the line first as well.
TO QUALIFY 2:35
EVIDENCE We'd like to see video evidence of the full run, please.
POINTS 35

1	2:08	**Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden
2	2:12	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel
3	2:28	**Dave Every**, Ellesmere Port
4	2:33	**Rex McGee, Dermot Ryan, Andrew Grieve**
5	2:34	**Bryan Docherty**, Inverkip



TIGER WOODS SPOT THE BALL

X MARKS THE SPOT

Tiger's got an excellent new game out – well, that's according to Kittsy, who has threatened us all with Certain Doom if we touch the office copy. Luckily Geraint lured him away so we could play it and take this shot for you. We've taken the golf-ball away, and all you have to do is put an X where you think the little round dimpled fella should be. You can send us a photocopy if you don't like cutting up your magazine, but only ONE entry per person, please.

❑ The entry we receive marking the point closest to the ball by 6th October wins **40 points.**

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

Can I kick it? Yes. I can do anything I like.

MARIO PARTY 5





PANIC STATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on Panic Pinball.
THE LAW You must use Waluigi. We feel sorry for him as he gets left out. Apart from that, stick to all the default settings. One player.
TO QUALIFY 22,000 points
EVIDENCE A snap of the screen showing your score.
POINTS 30

1	30,400	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
2	28,940	**Michael Rothwell** Wallasey
3	28,760	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
5	24,610	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
4	22,020	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel

JUMP! JUMP! JUMP!

WE WANT Your furthest distance for Leaf Leap.
THE LAW You can use any character you like. Apart from that, the default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 120m
EVIDENCE We'd like to see the whole entertaining incident on video, please.
POINTS 20

1	144	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
2	141	**Ewan McKenzie, Mark Gibson, Dave Every**
3	138	**Michael Rothwell** Wallasey
4	135	**Bryan Docherty**, Inverkip **Ben Bryce**, Worthing
5	129	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge **Andrew Grieve**, Rotherham

BIG REGGIE'S NAME-TAKING CHALLENGE

Ladies, rejoice! Men, weep! I am here, and I'm all about setting challenges and awarding points. Yeah, baby, yeah.

There are six tracks in F-Zero GX's AX cup. I want you to complete all six with a total time of seven minutes or less. You may snake.

Send me a picture of every race results screen by 6th October and I will kick your ass and give you 101.01 points.

KIRBY AIR RIDE





STRAIGHT RACE

WE WANT Your fastest time for a three-lap race.
THE LAW Must race on the Metal Top Ride. Three CPU opponents, level 1.
TO QUALIFY 50 seconds. You can do that!
EVIDENCE Video, so we can check that you've got the settings right.
POINTS 25

1	0'24"95	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
2	0'25"38	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel
3	0'26"06	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
4	0'26"93	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
5	0'29"60	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden

DEEP BREATHS

WE WANT To see how many enemies Kirbs can hoover up during a race.
THE LAW You can attempt this on any level and vehicle you like. Must use default settings. You must win.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Video evidence of Kirby absorbing his rivals.
POINTS 35

1	20	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	19	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
3	18	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
4	17	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel
5	16	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley

METAL GEAR



WOOOAH NELLY!

WE WANT You to kick Liquid Snake's treacherous, traitorous butt.
THE LAW No using cheats to give Snake an advantage.
TO QUALIFY 30 seconds left on the clock. You only have three to beat Liquid anyway…
EVIDENCE Clear video of the full battle.
POINTS 40

1	2:03	**Matthew Reynolds** Tamworth
2	1:53	**David Lent** Leeds
3	1:49	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel
4	1:47	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucester
5	1:37	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes

SONIC HEROES



MISSION POSSIBLE

WE WANT Your best score on the bizarre Casino Park stage (level 5).
THE LAW Must be playing as Team Sonic. No Chaotix or (shame on you if you thought of it) Team Rose!
TO QUALIFY 35,000
EVIDENCE A clear snap of your score at the end of the level.
POINTS 30

1	49,380	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
2	45,940	**David Lent** Leeds
3	45,570	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
4	45,290	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham
5	43,070	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar

MARIO KART



DESERT DRAG

WE WANT Your *slowest* time on Dry Dry Desert.
THE LAW Must play as Yoshi and Baby Bowser. And despite going slowly, you've still got to win the race! 100cc only.
TO QUALIFY 2:00
EVIDENCE Video of the full race – sorry, but we do get people cheating at *MK*.
POINTS 30

1	2:48:309	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	2:44:775	**Timothy Law** Margate
3	2:44:470	**Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries
4	2:43:458	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
5	2:43:273	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries

MARIO SUNSH...



SOLID GOLD

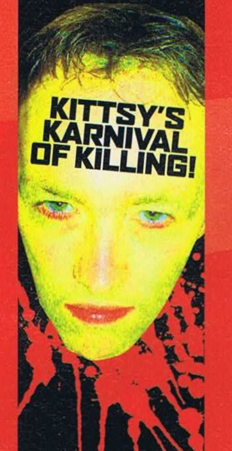
WE WANT To know how many coins you can collect.
THE LAW Collect them on any story you like, as long as it's on the Noki Bay level.
TO QUALIFY 110 coins
EVIDENCE A picture of the totals screen (press Z to see it) clearly showing your coin haul for the location.
POINTS 20

1	227	**Matthew Reynolds** Tamworth
2	225	**David Lent** Leeds
3	224	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
4	220	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
5	215	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO... I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…



BIRD BRAINED

I do not hate crows. I don't hate any animal, actually. But I'm not going to let sentiment get in the way of a good challenge. **Go to Billy Hatcher's Giant Palace section and complete the 'Defeat 100 Crows mission within 10 minutes. You may only use two eggs, and you must achieve an S-rank.** Video your run and send it to me by 6th October to win **40 points**.

1080° AVALANCHE



GATE EXPECTATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on the Frosty Shadows Gate Challenge.
THE LAW Must play as one of the boarders available from the start of the game. Default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 17,500
EVIDENCE Video evidence of your run.
POINTS 25

1	26,592	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	26,589	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
3	26,569	**L. Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
4	26,509	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
5	25,079	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham

SNOW COMPETITION

WE WANT To see how well you can do on the half pipe.
THE LAW Can be any of the boarders available from the start of the game. Must tackle the half pipe in Trick Attack mode.
TO QUALIFY 30,000
EVIDENCE Video evidence of the run in action.
POINTS 35

1	438,300	**David Lent** Leeds
2	421,400	**L. Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
3	333,300	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
4	231,000	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
5	177,500	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel

BILLY HATCHER





EGG ROLL

WE WANT Your highest combo kill with one egg roll, (not your highest combo, one roll).
THE LAW Can play as any character, on any level. Can use any old egg you like too. Isn't that nice?
TO QUALIFY 7
EVIDENCE Video of the roll.
POINTS 30

1	99	**Dave Pugh, Dermot Ryan, Mark Gibson; Rex McGee, Peter Bottomley, Bryan Docherty, Andrew Grieve, David Lent**
2	92	**Ewan McKenzie,** Dumfries
3	48	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
4	9	**L. Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
5	??	**Your name here?**

EAT CROW

WE WANT Your top time for defeating the 100 crows in mission 3: Dino Mountain .
THE LAW Can use no more than eight eggs. Must play as Billy. Must get an S-rank.
TO QUALIFY 10 minutes
EVIDENCE Full video run so we can see how many eggs you use for the level.
POINTS 30

1	2:13:56	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel
2	2:22:22	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
3	2:27:58	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
4	2:48:27	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
5	2:50:40	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham

WORMS 3D





AAAAARRRRR!

WE WANT To see how quickly you do Deathmatch Challenge 5.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 10:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 20

1	2:58	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
2	3:45	**David Lent** Leeds
3	3:59	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
4	5:03	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
5	6:24	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge

BAA HUMBUG

WE WANT Your best time for Super Sheep Challenge 2.
THE LAW Says it's illegal.
TO QUALIFY 4:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 25

1	5:31	**David Lent** Leeds
2	5:27	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes
3	5:24	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
3	5:24	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
4	5:10	**Simon Flatman**, Northampton **Rex McGee**, Trowbridge

FINAL FANTASY CC





DOWN AND OUT

WE WANT You to beat the Orc King (the Mine of Cathurgies boss).
THE LAW Single-player. Must be done on Myrrh Cycle Two. No Phoenix Downs allowed. That aside, anything goes.
TO QUALIFY 3 minutes
EVIDENCE Video.
POINTS 40

1	0'20"	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	0'56"	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucestershire
3	1'18"	**David Lent** Leeds
4	1'39"	**Chris Bowers** Kent
5	1'43"	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar

MOOGLE SEARCH

WE WANT You to get as many Moogle stamps as you can.
THE LAW Must be in single-player for full points. If you do it in multiplayer, you'll get the appropriate fraction.
TO QUALIFY 10 stamps
EVIDENCE A snap of your Moogle card.
POINTS 20

1	23	**Dave Every, Chris Bowers, Dermot Ryan, Martijn Heule, David Lent, Peter Bottomley, Michael Rothwell**
2	20	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
3	15	**Simon Flatman**, Northampton
4	11	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**, Milton Keynes
5	10	**Josh Ryan**, Dursley

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I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

ZELDA WW



GOING POSTAL

WE WANT You to sort as many letters as you can in the letter-sorting minigame on Dragon Roost Island.
THE LAW No cheating. We *will* spot it.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Full video of your postmastery, so we can gaze awestruck at your skills.
POINTS 30

1	32	**Dave Every**, **Dave Pugh**, **David Lent**.
2	30	**Andrew Mills** **Simon Flatman**, **Dominic Stroud**
3	29	**Bryan Docherty**, Inverkip **Stephen Limm**, Tamworth
4	28	**Chris Bowers** **Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**
4	27	**D. Ryan, T. Pang, C. Fletcher, A. Pollard, M. Gibson, P. Bridges**

PIKMIN



GROWMIN

WE WANT To see how many Pikmin you can sprout in The Final Trial.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 150
EVIDENCE A shot of the final level results screen so we can see how many Min you grew during the level. Make sure it's a clear one.
POINTS 30

1	239	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
2	229	**Michael Harvey** Ellesmere Port
3	228	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
4	206	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar
5	199	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley



SKIP!

Bouncy bouncy.

We want you to skip as hard as you can in *Wario Ware$: Mega Party Game$*. Doing the Jumpin' Rope game, get a score of at least 20. Send us the evidence – either video or photo – by 6th October and we'll give you 20 points for your trouble. What's more, the person who manages the most 'skips' will receive an additional 20 points.



ENTRY FORM

FILL IN THE SCORES!

Name ....
....

Address ....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....

Postcode ....

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Defaced or illegible papers will be disqualified and burned in the furnaces of Hell, *pour encourager les autres.*

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
- ❑ KIRBY'S REVENGE ....
- ❑ ROCK ME ....

TIMESPLITTERS 2
- ❑ BRICKATHON ....
- ❑ IRREPRESSIBLE! ....

FILL IN THE SCORES!
- ❑ MILLIONAIRE ....
- ❑ WITH JAM ON ....

MARIO PARTY 5
- ❑ PANIC STATIONS ....
- ❑ JUMP! JUMP! ....

KIRBY AIR RIDE
- ❑ STRAIGHT RACE ....
- ❑ DEEP BREATHS ....

1080° AVALANCHE
- ❑ GATE EXPECTATIONS ....
- ❑ SNOW COMP. ....

BILLY HATCHER
- ❑ EGG ROLL ....
- ❑ DINO BUNDLE ....

WORMS 3D
- ❑ AAAARRRRR! ....
- ❑ BAA HUMBUG ....

METAL GEAR: TWIN SNAKES
- ❑ WOOOAH NELLY! ....

SONIC HEROES
- ❑ MISSION POSSIBLE ....

MARIO KART
- ❑ DESERT DRAG ....

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
- ❑ SOLID GOLD ....

ZELDA WIND WAKER
- ❑ GOING POSTAL ....

PIKMIN
- ❑ GROWMIN ....

FINAL FANTASY CC
- ❑ DOWN AND OUT ....
- ❑ MOOGLE SEARCH ....

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, **NGC** MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

THE LEADERBOARD
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?…

1 Matthew Pellett Spalding **5356.06pts**

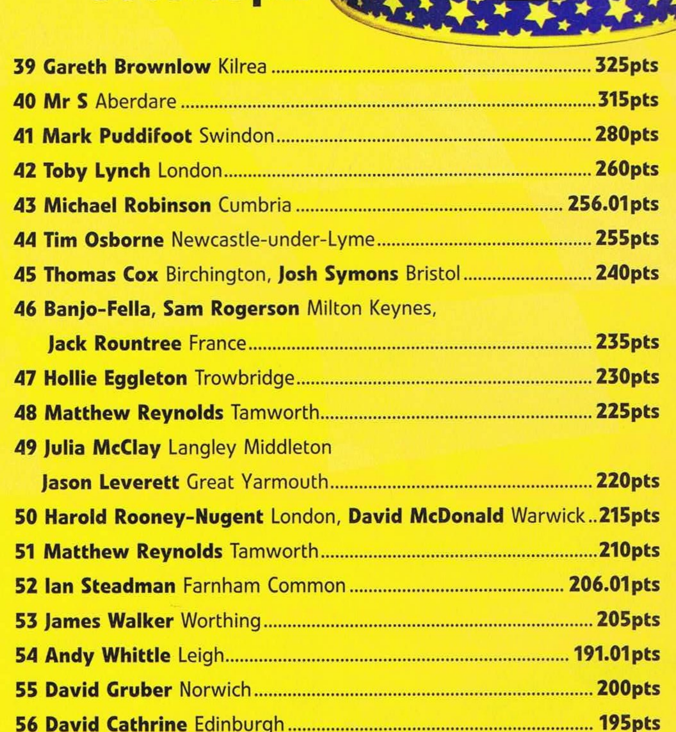
2 Rex McGee Trowbridge **5041.06pts**

3 Steve Brooks Broughton Astley **3231.06pts**

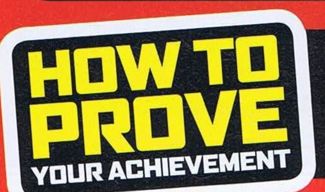
4 Andrew Grieve Rotherham **3011.06pts**

5 Dave Pugh Saffron Walden **3005.05pts**

- **6 Dave Every** Ellesmere Port …… **2945.05pts**
- **7 Bryan Docherty** Inverkip …… **2843.03pts**
- **8 Peter Bottomley** Cheshire …… **2654.04pts**
- **9 Martijn Heule** The Netherlands …… **2449.04pts**
- **10 Dermot Ryan** Mullingar …… **2070.05pts**
- **11 Chris Fletcher** Stockport …… **2058.03pts**
- **12 Andrew Mills** Dundee …… **1773.03pts**
- **13 Rob Jones** Poole …… **1747.02pts**
- **14 Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries …… **1741.01pts**
- **15 Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes …… **1680pts**
- **16 Michael Rothwell** Wallasey …… **1602.02pts**
- **17 David Lent** Leeds …… **1601.01pts**
- **18 Phil Hughes** Cheshire …… **1527.02pts**
- **19 Dominic Stroud** Gloucester …… **1523.03pts**
- **20 Mark Gibson** Dumfries …… **1293.03pts**
- **21 Ben Bryce** Worthing …… **1006.01pts**
- **22 Simon Mason** West Parley …… **691.01pts**
- **23 Michael Seaward** Stanley …… **626.01pts**
- **24 Steven Limm** Tamworth …… **621.01pts**
- **25 Adam Pollard** Dorset …… **615pts**
- **26 Dean Hailstone** Jarrow …… **562.02pts**
- **27 Barry Lewis** Dairsie …… **560pts**
- **28 Christoffer Lindgren** Sweden …… **526.01pts**
- **29 Eskil Vestre** Norway …… **500pts**
- **30 Andreas Nakkerud** Norway …… **490pts**
- **31 Scott Littlewood** Norwich …… **445pts**
- **32 David Williamson** Bathgate …… **440pts**
- **33 Daniel Sneddon** Bingley …… **401.01pts**
- **34 Gordon Yeung** Cardiff …… **386.01pts**
- **35 Josh Jones** Barnstaple …… **380pts**
- **36 Josh Ryan** Dursley …… **350pts**
- **37 Alasdair Campbell** Elston …… **335pts**
- **38 Andrew McGrae** Southport …… **330pts**
- **39 Gareth Brownlow** Kilrea …… **325pts**
- **40 Mr S** Aberdare …… **315pts**
- **41 Mark Puddifoot** Swindon …… **280pts**
- **42 Toby Lynch** London …… **260pts**
- **43 Michael Robinson** Cumbria …… **256.01pts**
- **44 Tim Osborne** Newcastle-under-Lyme …… **255pts**
- **45 Thomas Cox** Birchington, **Josh Symons** Bristol …… **240pts**
- **46 Banjo-Fella, Sam Rogerson** Milton Keynes, **Jack Rountree** France …… **235pts**
- **47 Hollie Eggleton** Trowbridge …… **230pts**
- **48 Matthew Reynolds** Tamworth …… **225pts**
- **49 Julia McClay** Langley Middleton **Jason Leverett** Great Yarmouth …… **220pts**
- **50 Harold Rooney-Nugent** London, **David McDonald** Warwick …… **215pts**
- **51 Matthew Reynolds** Tamworth …… **210pts**
- **52 Ian Steadman** Farnham Common …… **206.01pts**
- **53 James Walker** Worthing …… **205pts**
- **54 Andy Whittle** Leigh …… **191.01pts**
- **55 David Gruber** Norwich …… **200pts**
- **56 David Cathrine** Edinburgh …… **195pts**
- **57 Simon Flatman** Northampton …… **190pts**
- **58 Janne Kaitila** Finland, **Paul Gibb** Cheltenham …… **185pts**
- **59 Lee Graham** Bristol, **Robert Woodward** The Wirral …… **180pts**



Each month, the totals will be totted up and balances displayed in the Big Table™. The top five spots at the end win goodies – Numero Uno gets not only planet-wide admiration, but hard material goods. We keep track of every entrant's scores, so you can boost your points each month and move onto or up the list. Send us your entry today!



PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Use a fast film (200 or 400 ASA).
2. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
3. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) and draw the curtains.

PLEASE NOTE: Any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification.

VIDEO TAPES

1. Plug the Gamecube TV lead into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After recording the challenge, rewind the tape. We can't return tapes, sorry.

HEY! IT'S THE RETURN OF…

GAME ON!

NGC READER CHALLENGES

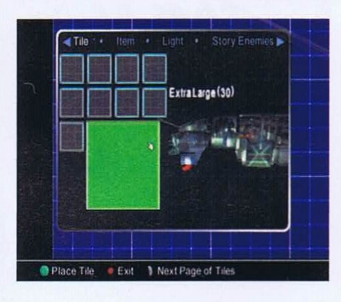


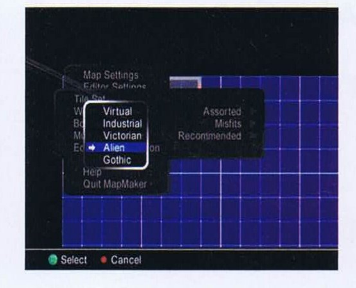
Old games never die – they just come to Game On, the gaming equivalent of Eastbourne, where they just have to do a little bit extra each month while they wait to slip into history.

If you've got a Game On idea, send it to us at the address printed at the bottom of the page of the page opposite. The person who sends in the best one each month will get a brand new game. Do note, though, that it is a brand new game from our Drawer of Software, so titles are pulled out at random. It all depends on what we've got and how mature your handwriting looks…

TIMESPLITTERS 2









HAIL TO THE CHEF

Jack Shukman,
Oxford

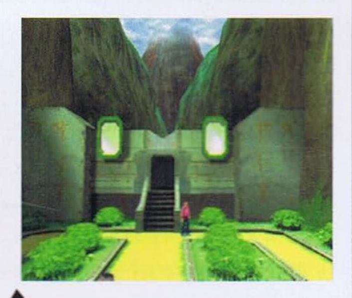
What's for dinner? Squid rings, gingerbread and, erm, dinosaur steaks. Using the Map Maker, create a map with two adjoining Extra Large Rooms. Create four random start points and put in two weapons placements (make them both the same, the homing launcher). Now, **in Elimination mode, play as the Chef versus the following bots: two calimari, two gingerbread men and two dinosaurs**. You're not allowed to use character abilities, so turn 'em off and make the bots four or five stars. Next, disable Time Limit, Radar, Handicap, Power-ups, Start With Gun and One-shot Kills. You have 10 lives. Now start playing, find the launcher and cook the food before the food cooks *you*…

LIVES LEFT  10  9  6–8

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM







MOUNT MISERY

Thomas Goodwin,
Location unknown

Mount Battle's a bit of a slugfest at the best of times, but have you ever tried to do it without taking care of your little helpers? That's what Thomas wants you to do – to **see how many fights you can win at Mount Battle without healing your team.** What's more, you're not allowed to use any Shadow Pokémon – ordinary ones only. You're allowed one curative item for each monster, but that's your lot. Now start counting…

VICTORIES  8+  6–8  2–5



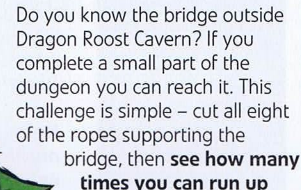
ZELDA: WIND WAKER





ROPE TRICK

Russ, Al and Trist
Southampton



Do you know the bridge outside Dragon Roost Cavern? If you complete a small part of the dungeon you can reach it. This challenge is simple – cut all eight of the ropes supporting the bridge, then **see how many times you can run up and down it without the bridge collapsing or Link falling into the water**. What's more, running to one end of the bridge and back is a single lap, and it's laps we're measuring – this isn't cricket, where just reaching the end counts as a run.

LAPS  **20**   **15**   **10**

SPIDER-MAN 2





SWING CITY

Desmond Harris,
Luton

As you've no doubt experienced for yourself, simply swinging through New York City is the best thing in Activision's excellent superhero sim. So this hugely enjoyable challenge is testing just how skillful you are at slinging your webs. Desmond wants you to **swing across New York, from the Lower West Side to the bridge in Tudor City – and you must go through Central Park on the way**. How quick a time can you do it in? Happily, you can use any Swing Speed Upgrade you like.

TIME  **45s**  **1m**  **1m30**

NGC CHALLENGES WANTED

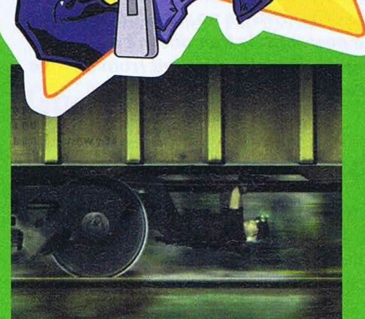


NOW IT'S YOUR TURN…

Have you discovered a weird and wonderful new way to play Nintendo games? Can you sum it all up in about 100 words? If you have a challenge you'd like to share with other NGC readers, then we want to hear about it. Jot down a quick explanation of what you've got to do on a piece of paper, set three suitable levels of achievement for gold, silver and bronze medals, stick it in an envelope, and send it to…

GAME ON, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with Game On as the subject line.

We'll take challenges for absolutely any game on the good ol' 'Cube, but this month we're particularly interested in…


SPLINTER CELL: PT


SECOND SIGHT


SERIOUS SAM


MARIO GOLF

THE BEST GET PRINTED RIGHT HERE, AND OUR FAVOURITE CHALLENGE WILL WIN A SHINY NEW GAMECUBE GAME. DEAL?

30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW

MAILBOX

EMAIL US!
Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'…
ngc@futurenet.co.uk
Include your *name and address* so we know who to credit the letter to. Do it! Do it! Do it now!

STAR LETTER

The winner of the Star Letter receives a bundle of gaming gear courtesy of Joytech, incorporating two Advanced Controllers, a gold-plated RGB Scart cable, an 8Mb memory card and a GC/GBA link cable. Mint!

JOYTECH

'Third-party'

So we need to buy more third-party games ('Denying access', **NGC**/96 Mailbox). Excuse me? Is the third-party Gamecube situation so bad that we have to buy crap like *Urban Freestyle Soccer* to stop Nintendo's credibility running away? I don't understand why all of a sudden we have to tolerate pap just so Nintendo don't get slammed for having a small library of games. Stuff like *Splinter Cell, Beyond Good & Evil* and *Resident Evil* is welcome, since the developers and publishers of said titles are patient enough to develop decent games for GC without jumping ship because of the chance that Nintendo's own stuff could overshadow it.

Why is it that third-party publishers seem to have abused their positions as the driving force in opinion? Publishers like Konami seem to have a big hand in the 'kiddy image' issue because Hideo Kojima, while he's not busy making philosophical rubbish for his next Metal Gear game, sounds off about how DS is for children. It's really not fair that groups like them manage to get away with this. They tout their opinions of 'kiddy image' and whatnot as fact.

It's a sad day when mass influence comes more from a third-party than from the main first-party hardware maker. Why is it that Sony and Microsoft are taken seriously by third-party publishers and developers, whereas Nintendo are never able to defend themselves? Why do people feel that without *Burnout 3*, it's a grave sign? It's not worth crying over a pretty average-looking racing series that's only three games in.

If the Revolution proves to be a 'developer system' like Nintendo DS is supposed to be, in so much as it can spark new ideas and at least put some creativity into the most mundane developers, it will be thanks to Nintendo's own openness about its capabilities and brilliant gimmickry.

But will Hideo Kojima slag it off, then go back to make up some absurd terrorist situation game about the glass being 'half-full' or 'half-empty'?
Alessandro Shepheard, High Wycombe

The letter you refer to specified* good *third-party games, but I think you have a point. Somewhere. Although you are wrong to single out Hideo Kojima. He is stating a simple fact when he says DS will appeal to a young audience – Nintendo aim to release the machine at a price that everyone can afford, not just cashed-up, gadget-hungry, 20-something blokes. Kojima has also said he does want to make a unique DS game. If you honestly think his concepts are 'rubbish' and 'absurd' then why do you seem to want him on board? Ed

Bonus Letters

You would be culturing the many people who never got a N64.
Steven Duncan, Perthshire
Like bacteria? Ed

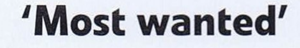
I reckon they'll need to fix that one before they release it.
Emil Øversveen, Norway
Damn right. Ed

I have spent ten pounds on something rubbish .
Lewis Miller, Hitchin
It wasn't me. Ed

To Nintendo: Put a word processor on DS. It would be so useful.
Adam Cafolla, via email
If by 'useful' you mean 'awful'. Ed

A nice pair of loafers would do you mate. Get it done or prepare for a dry slap.
Luke Gilbody, Worcester Park
Slap! Ed

Am I the only person who gets incredibly excited when I hear DS mentioned?
Brad Finney, Whitwick
Geraint also has this embarrassing problem. Ed



'Most wanted'

As far back as I can remember the best game on each Nintendo product I have owned bar the GBA has been its Zelda game. *Ocarina of Time, Wind Waker, Link to the Past, Legend of Zelda* and *Link's Awakening* have all been landmarks in videogame history. So why is it that when news of a new Zelda game comes out you place *Resident Evil 4* higher in your Most Wanted chart? No doubt it will be great in its own right, and I'm sure I'll buy it and love it. But this is Zelda we're talking about. How can *anything* come close to being a more anticipated game? Have you not seen the film clip on your DVD? What is going on?
Daniel Cohen, London

We've seen the film clip. We've even seen a much longer version. But we've played an entire level of Resi 4 and found it to be the most amazing thing on the horizon for Gamecube. When we get to play Zelda, perhaps our opinion will change. Ed



'Pleasure you'

I fully agree with David Gosen's criticism of Microsoft for pushing for the early release of the next Xbox. It's undeniable that consoles and games are expensive for the amount of pleasure you get from them, and to have to buy them in *FIFA*-style updates for something slightly better than the last one is frankly unfair. I hope Nintendo will not follow Microsoft's example, although sadly I think they might have to, to stay in the market and avoid a late entry like the N64.
Dan Ericsson, Storrington

I'm with Gosen on this one too. The splendid graphics of* Resi 4 *and* New Zelda *show that the current generation of hardware still has plenty to offer. There's no way I'm shelling out on a new console that doesn't do anything significantly different from the one I've already got. Ed

'Tribal design'

I know I'm not alone when I look at the new Tribal SP design and feel a pang of envy. I was one of the ones who bought an SP when it was first released so I can't really get the Tribal design without shelling out another 90 quid. So what I



HONOURABLE MENTIONS
Thanks to everyone who wrote in this, including (but not limited to): Joe Lawrence, Grundisburgh; Mike Heath, Buckingham; Christian Connolly, Sutton Coldfield; Eoin Connolly, Ireland; Rob Morgan, via email; Kyle Nichol, Lincolnshire; Euan Black, Fife; John Ogilvie, Forres; Nicky Dykes, Glasgow; David Barber, Sunderland; Richard Ferguson, Northern Ireland; Steven Carne, Callington; Olly Parry-Jones, Bristol; Jonathan Trier Brikner, Denmark; Paul Evans, Bristol; Ryan Attrill, Isle of Wight; Bent Eigil Sumelius, Norway; Thomas Bignold, Dorset; Kez Simpson, Manchester; Adam Lees, Sanderstead; Ryan Keane, Birmingham; Daniel Scott,

did was paint my old one. It took a while but I think I did a good job and I wondered what you'd think.
Chris Morrison, Bromley

***Just don't be tempted to get it tattooed on your face.* Ed**



'My advances'

Thanks for the cast of *Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life* on page 90 of issue 93. I still had to choose which of the three girls I should court. After seeing the cast I decided against all three. Instead, preferring the more mature women, I've decided to go for Samantha, the housewife. Let's see if she can resist my advances...
Robin Kuipers, Holland

***Sweet baby Jesus, she's already married! I wouldn't want to be in your shoes when her husband Grant (the one character we couldn't locate for the cast list) finds out.* Ed**

'My foot'

Is there going to be any chance of a proper Final Fantasy game instead of the second-rate crap they've given us? I read all reviews of *FF:CC* and there was no mention of cutting your foes in half with Odin's Zentetsuken, or the awesome power of Knights Of The Round, or a spike from Cactuar. Square-Enix are taking us for muppets. The only thing I can see being summoned on future FF games for the GC is my foot. If you're listening, Miyamoto, pull your tongue out of Square's backside and start taking names. Demand Bahamut kick some arse.
Justin Paul Jones, Bedford

***Shigsy is going to mess you up real nice.* Ed**

'Gods'

Having received the Nintendo ad-mails about the redesigned DS I can only say... thank the gods for that!

Nintendo finally seem to be coming to their senses and realising the challenge from Microsoft and Sony.

I was planning to buy one anyway, albeit along with a brown paper bag in order to play it in public. The new design, especially against the Sony PSP, is amazing by contrast with the E3 one. Such a simple thing to change, yet it turns a grudging 'Probably' into a wallet-tearing 'I WANT IT!!!" What the hell, I'll probably sleep with it too (entirely platonic, of course...)
Peter Lello, via email

***I'd still like to have seen an analogue stick to cater for games like* Metroid *that aren't suited for touch screen or D-pad control.* Ed**

Bonus Letters

Please magnify my stupidity.
Ben Collings, Loughborough
***Too easy.* Ed**

Stop lying to yourselves, you know you want Nintendo.
Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
***Too true.* Ed**

I'm afraid I'll have to call in a favour.
Jon Challinor, Stafford
***Gulp.* Ed**

I would buy Zelda if Link had to run around collecting monkey poo and was playing an Indian nose flute.
Chris Hawkins, Plymouth
***I'd rent it first.* Ed**

He must be the worst games player ever by the sounds of how long he usually lasted in that game.
John Booth, via email
***Yep.* Ed**

Even though I live in Wales, I am not Welsh. I am English.
Dean Jones, Wales
***Gimroo and biff!* Geraint**

After playing *Animal Crossing, Harvest Moon* and *The Sims* for a while, I now lust after blood and guts and big massive guns, and heads smashing against steel girders. BRRAIIIINNSSSSS.
Paul, Leeds
***Lovely brains.* Ed**

There isn't enough sent-in art. So here is a cow. Enjoy.
Helen McCartney, Co Durham
***Beautiful.* Ed**

MOOOOOOO



'I've cracked'

I think I've cracked Zelda's Timeline. Everyone seems to think that *The Wind Waker* comes last in the series, but that can't be true. In *Wind Waker*, before you collect the eight pieces of Triforce, the King of Red Lions says: "When the Hero of Time was called to embark on another journey and left the land of Hyrule, he was separated from the elements that made him a hero. It is said that at that time, the Triforce of Courage was split into eight shards and hidden throughout the land."

So the Triforce has not been re-united between *Ocarina of Time* and *Wind Waker*. So *A Link to the Past* can't come between *Ocarina* and *Wind Waker*. Also, The Oracle games have the Triforce reunited, so they can't be before *Wind Waker*, and in *The Adventure of Link*, the Triforce is in the Great Palace, so it, too, is after *Wind Waker*. (And so probably is the original Zelda, as the two of them are tied together.)

So all the theories that say that *Wind Waker* is the last go straight out the window, but it does prove that Link the First is in *Ocarina* and *Majora*; Link II in *WW*; Link III and IV are a mystery.
Mark Nisbet, Galston

***Good theory. Here's an alternative one...* Ed**

'I understand'

In Issue 96, on pages 42 and 43, you attempted to give a timeline for the Zelda series. Unfortunately it is wrong. As I understand it, it's not so much one story but several. The first story goes like this: *Legend of Zelda, Adventure of Link, Link To The Past, Link's Awakening, Four Swords. Adventure* starts with a reference to the original game, and *LTTP* follows because it talks for the first time about the return of Ganon. *Link's Awakening* is next because Link is still alive after *LTTP*.

As for the second story, *Ocarina* is followed by *Majora's Mask* and the Oracle games. *Wind*

CORRECTION CORNER

On page 3 of **NGC**/96, in the "Why we're No.1 For Nintendo" section, why did you put 1992 for all of the mags. Last time I looked, the Gamecube wasn't released until 2001.
Matt Fox, Leicester

***Erm...* Ed**

In issue 96 on page 46 you wrote, "Six years have passed since the world..." whereas the magazine lying open next to it clearly states (all right, not *that* clearly) "Three years have passed since...". This kind of mistake is unacceptable, so I will accept three copies of every game in your "essential" chart, or a Go-Sen complete with "there has never been a better time to mangle the cretin" programming.
Aaron Ayling, Cheshire

***We copied the whole paragraph from the original uncorrected text document used to create issue one rather than what was actually printed. Whoops.* Ed**

Perth; Ben Thompson, Alsager; Sarah Taylor, Widnes; Nathan Edgeworth, Cardiff; Paul Streets, Northwich; Henry Bailey, Wiltshire; Tim Moule, March; Ollie Jones, Ipswich; Ryan Attril, Isle of Wight; Ben Laine, Barnet; Matthew Peel, Shifnal; Amelia Sawyerr, Winchester; Owain David, Crewe; Andre Morello, via email; Omar Jooma, London; Alastair Baird, Kirkcowan; Philip Roberts, Holywell; Tony White, Wells; Luke Josey, Australia; DJ Fryer, Seaton; Paul Blake, Dublin; Michael Fenton, Livingston; Filip Sund, Norway; Ciarán Treacy, Dublin; James Newell, Portadown; Danny Rafferty, via email; Chris Watson, Berkhamsted; Sam Charters, via email; Daniel Rhodes, via email; Rhys Simons, via email; Mikael Mikkonen, Finland. Thanks!

GrINtENdo!

SEND US YOUR NINTENDO JOKES! MAKE THEM GOOD AND YOU WIN A GAME. BUT IF MR WHITE FAILS TO SEE THE FUNNY SIDE, THE YELLOW PIKMIN DIES. HORRIBLY.
THIS MONTH: DAVID BOREHAM FROM MILTON KEYNES



WRITE TO... GRINTENDO, MAILBOX, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

Waker takes place centuries later. If you remember the end of *Ocarina*, Link still possesses the Triforce of Courage, which is commented on at the start of the Oracle games because Link moves boulders which only the Hylian Hero can move. We all know that *Majora's Mask* followed *Ocarina* as Link is travelling through the land of Hyrule with the ocarina. Now those of us who have played *Wind Waker* will remember the story of the Hero of Time and how he defeated Ganon, which clearly refers to *Ocarina* because only in *Ocarina* did Link get called the Hero of Time.

I cannot put a definite position of the latest Zelda, because in the story of the Hero of Time, we are told that no new hero appeared between *Ocarina* and *Wind Waker*. But the people prayed to the Triforce and the gods for a way to save them from Ganon, after he returned to Hyrule having been defeated by Link previously in *Ocarina of Time*, so the gods simply covered the land of Hyrule in water.
Jon Staddon, via email

Another elegant explanation of a series of mostly separate games that, in general, fit together in only the loosest possible way. That the Zelda games can inspire this kind of passion among their many fans is testament to the genius of the many people responsible for them. It's the Nintendo Difference. Ed

'Eagerly awaiting'

So I came across Nintendo's new 'NES Classics' range. Excited? No. Disgusted? Instead of creating great new games for GBA, Nintendo focus on porting across old and ugly games. I could understand if they were supposed to attract those who had never played them before, but *Super Mario Bros*? You can get a better version for Game Boy Color for a few quid. *Donkey Kong*? You'd have to be pretty dumb to spend £15 on three levels. I wouldn't pay a fiver for any of them. These are old and dated titles, and are best left as fond memories for retro obsessives. And most of them can be found as minigames on *Animal Crossing* – a much better place for them, I feel, and a damn sight cheaper. Want to play 'NES classics'? Spend a tenner on a second-hand NES, then, and play them as intended, saving a fortune in the process.
Dan Robinson, Skipton

If they were presented in special collectors' edition boxes, like they are in Japan, they might be worth the cash. But you're right,* Super Mario DX *for the GBC is miles better than the NES Classics version, and many of the others are downloadable from within* Animal Crossing. *The whole point of the Classics range is to be collectable – why stick with the standard packaging? Ed

'Draw the line'

I was watching the *Resident Evil* footage on your DVD and it occurred to me how realistic games might get. There's talk that in the next 10 years photo-realistic graphics will exist for films and games. Now for films this is okay, as it would mean an end to out-of-place computer animation. But for games it's a different story. In games like *TimeSplitters* it would look like you're shooting a real person, and this could affect somebody's mind, creating the same trauma that soldiers have had to go through. In a game like *Resi* it is okay because you can tell it's not real, but if the game looks real some people will think it is real. I believe this is a big problem.
Andy Bennison, Cheshire

Sparks flew more than a decade ago over* Mortal Kombat. *If you could go back five years and show somebody the* Resi 4 *footage, they'd say it was already photo-realistic, but five years from now it'll look very dated. Ed

'Love him'

I'm a Wario fan. I love Wario. I love him so much that I've replaced Andross with him and Fox with Mario! Isn't it great?
Joel Cheetham, Barnsley

It's incredible. Anyone else possess super artistic skillz? Ed



SO TELL ME THIS...

You send question. Brain figure out answer.

1. Will the European version of Donkey Konga *come packaged with the bongos?*
2. Will you be able to buy an extra pair separately, for two-player fun, and if so, for how much?
3. When I found out I could get Animal Crossing *and an Action Replay for £40 I snapped them up immediately. Which games do you recommend importing?*
Aaron Ayling, Cheshire

1. Yes.
2. Yes, although the exact pricing hadn't been sorted at the time of writing. I'd guess extra bongos will be around £25 each.
3. There are few really essential imports on Gamecube. The NTSC versions of* Ikaruga *are better than the PAL one, and you can often get games earlier by importing from other territories. You might like the Japanese* Donkey Konga *tunes too. Some of them are really good fun to play. And sadly, you can't escape the DK Rap – it's in all versions.

I was wondering if you could answer a question that has perplexed me for a while. On the spines of Gamecube boxes there are small coloured triangles, and I was curious as to what they meant. The vast majority of my games, regardless of developer, genre or age restrictions, have green triangles on the side. However, my imported Animal Crossing *has a brown one and my copies of* Beyond Good & Evil *And* Prince of Persia *have pink ones. What makes those two Ubi Soft games special? It can't apply to all Ubi games as my copy of* XIII *has a green triangle.*
Paul Davison, Sedgefield

Nintendo manufactures every game for every PAL territory in a huge factory at the company HQ near Frankfurt. To ensure localised versions of the games go to the correct country, they're marked with colour-coded flashes on the box inserts. Green is for the UK only, purple is for Germany, and presumably brown is for Australia. As for the pink-badged Ubi games, I believe they're intended for both the UK and the Netherlands.

Is it possible to 'chip' Gamecubes so they play backups and imports?
J Saunders, Bristol

You can easily modify a Japanese Gamecube so it also plays US games, but to play imported titles on UK machines you'll have to buy a Freeloader disc. As for chipping one so it'll play 'backups', there's no piracy at all on Gamecube.

ACCESS: CONFIRMED

METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES

Samus Aran's back. And only **NGC** has level five security clearance to her latest mission. Scan the next issue and be first to discover the truth…



DONKEY KONGA

The dirty ape's best game in years thunders into the UK. Time to bring out the bongos…

NINTENDO DS

We pump Nintendo for the UK launch details. See how much they spill next issue…

PAPER MARIO 2

Exclusive eye-opening interview with Nintendo's development team.

DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY

NGC get their swerve on with EA's hip-hop bruiser. Get our verdict – an' ya know our word is bond.

PLUS! ANOTHER GREAT FREE GIFT

EXTRA!

- Our verdict of Advance Guardian Heroes!
- The UK version of Pikmin 2 taken apart!
- Animal Crossing and Second Sight tips!
- More wise nuggets from Madame Greener!

Magazine contents subject to change – but only for the better!

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THE 20 BIGGEST GAMES

YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND

The good, the great and the unfathomable of the games available only in Japan.

BONUS!

BABELFISH SAYS... *English versions of game website info from hugely entertaining online translator.*

FAMITSU SCORE Ratings from revered Japanese games mag, Famitsu Weekly. Loves all games.

20. HIKARU NO GO 3



Based on a comic book – yes, a comic book about boardgame players – this is a character-led version of Japan's fancypants chess, with all the tile-shoving magic you'd expect from Hiroshi Yamauchi's favourite board game (after Mousetrap). But we're pretty sure Yamauchi doesn't chuck dragons about like the players here do. Although…



BABELFISH SAYS: *"It can enjoy collection of questions even outside the house."*

FAMITSU SCORE: Not reviewed



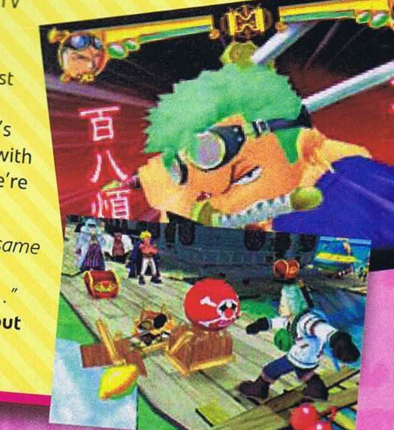
19. ONE PIECE GRAND BATTLE! 3

Fist-planting insanity – think of it as a 3D *Smash Bros* – starring Japan's heroiest comicbook and TV hero, pirate lad Monkey D. Luffy. Probably not a good sign that players seem most interested in spotting cameo appearances by Pandaman, who's on the run after incurring debts with Tomato Gang. What, you think we're making this up?



BABELFISH SAYS: *"The same straw raincoat it exceeds 'shooting skill necessary'..."*

FAMITSU SCORE: 27 out of 40





18. MOMOTAROU DENTETSU 12

Mario Party is a gurgling sprog compared to this wizened old man, soon to hit episode 13. It's a bit like *Mario Party*, actually, but with no minigames, Monopoly-style property purchase, a train where Mario's fat face should be and a cameo from Bimbougami, the Japanese poverty god. Not at all like *Mario Party*, in fact.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"'Pink iron 12' most misfortune largest Bonn B appearance!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 32 out of 40 (gold award)



17. DERBY TSUKU 3: I WILL BE A DERBY CHAMPION

So not all Sega-designed animals are insane – there are 3,000 horses in this that don't so much as crack a smile. Equine breeding/racing sims are bigger than fish-on-toast in Japan; this one actually speaks your horse's name, adding that personal touch to the news that your little blinder has sprained its knee and been shot.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"In addition, the water where with defective Baba of the dirt floats."*

FAMITSU SCORE: 32 out of 40 (gold award)



16. CUBIC LODE RUNNER

Hudson archaeologists dig up 300-year-old action-puzzler, crudely sellotape a third dimension on and dress the lead character in red and blue dungarees they found in some plumber's washing basket. The 'burying people alive' angle here dents Gamecube's family image. Just ¥3,000, though – the same as a nice dog.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"Being fixed to the hole the stripe it is uninformed OUT!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 23 out of 40





15. ZOIDS VS. 2

Dinosaurs, extinct? They live on with names like 'Diablo Tiger Alpha', 'Matrix Dragon' and, er, 'Gustav', in a two-player fighter best described as *Custom Robo* plus Jurassic Park multiplied by Sumo wrestling. Nostalgia-cursed folk who attracted playground head-beatings as kids by choosing Zoids over Transformers: your time has come!

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Customization of fist mode exclusive use is necessary!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 26 out of 40





13. SHINSEIKI GPX CYBER FORMULA

Just out in Japan, and subtitled "Road to the INFINITY". More like "Road to March 2008", in fact – it's a level-headed imagining of the sensible future love-child of *F-Zero* and F1, with vehicles hitting top speeds of 600kph. Gasp – that's nearly illegal! Not helped, either, by the races all being won by Captain Falcon Schumacher.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"All elements accelerate on the circuit!!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 25 out of 40





14. TENGAI MAKYOU II: MANJIMARU

AKA "Far East of Eden": a cel-shaded RPG that, thanks to previous incarnations on Sega Saturn, Neo Geo and PC Engine CD, has been backing the wrong horse since the days of Don Johnson. Huge in Japan – must be those revolutionary turn-based battles and chat-heavy village sections.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Human nature the super unique character full load which overflows!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 27 out of 40





12. KOROKKE!

Another anime/TV show turned 'digital entertainment', with a typically wild-haired hero (complete with that must-have Japanese accessory, a small yellow hat-pig) wandering a map and knocking the blocks off anyone and anything he meets. And dressing as a penguin, natch. Buy now and get special Korokke wristbands! Really.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Sound the bell of the clock tower of puzzle!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: Not reviewed









MADE IN JAPAN

"Plot involves… cleaning chimneys"



11. GAKUEN TOSHI VARANOIR ROSE

They claim it's GC's first "beauty girl game", and we're not arguing. An adventure that's simply a Gamecube disc full of cartoon girls – with names like 'Vanilla' and 'Chocolate' – running about in a way that means you can almost see their knickers. Plot involves ancient demons, swords, and, inexplicably, cleaning chimneys.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Furthermore, work of smokestack which enters cleaning is handled even now."*

FAMITSU SCORE: 27 out of 40



10. CHARINKO HERO

Possibly the only game in the "Tricycle Battle Racing" genre, *Charinko Hero* poses the question: what happens when you take classic Japanese TV and movie heroes (e.g. freakin' Power Rangers), blow their heads up in the 'Super-Deformed' style, then set them off racing around on little tricycles? The answer: big-headed Japanese TV stars riding around on tricycles.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"Some item comes out, luck it does and is to be!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 26 out of 40







9. OHENRO-SAN: HOSSHIN NO DOJO

A full name too long to print here without adding 15 pages to the mag, and a Panasonic game aimed at "old people" – albeit old people who happen to have a brushed chrome Panasonic Q in their living room. It allows Japanese OAPs with broken old bodies to take part in the fabled 88-temple pilgrimage around Shikoku island, using a step-o-matic floor pad. Confused? Imagine a game that simulates 88 consecutive trips to the Diana Memorial Fountain and you're roughly on the right lines.

歩数をためることができる印籠型専用歩数計、
運動量や消費カロリーもチェックできる。

専用歩数計にためられた歩数は「お遍路さん」のゲーム上の歩数に加算することができるため、日頃の散歩に歩数計をつけていれば、四国巡礼の旅も楽々クリアできるでしょう。歩数計には健康チェック機能が付いており、歩数から運動量や消費カロリーを算出します。これらの情報はゲームをする時に確認することができ、毎日の健康

歩数計に表示される項目

1. 到着位置　2. 総歩数
3. 消費カロリー　4. 時刻

※その他、ゲームキューブに接続することで、霊場クリア箇所、距離数、健康チェックもでき





BABELFISH SAYS: *"While enjoying simple walking motion, it is possible to pilgrimage without the excessiveness."*

FAMITSU SCORE: Not reviewed

8. CAPTAIN TSUBASA

Sounds like a space pilot, actually a soccer-mad anime boy-hero turned football-strategy star. Tsubasa has been shooting for the Japan Youth team since the original Famicom – surprising, given the bizarre *Pokémon*-ish play that sees in-game footie skillz activated *from the pause menu.* Still, it could be worse: the GBA version is a trading card game, for Tsubasa's sake. A World Cup 2006 tip for England: summoning a 30 metre tall demon of pure evil really intimidates opposing defenders.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"It is the sport simulation game which can experience charm!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: Not reviewed





7. POWERFUL PRO BASEBALL 11

Big heads, big heads, big heads. The *FIFA* of Japanese sports sims goes back years: readers who are close to death may recall our review of *Pro Baseball 3* in **NGC**/4, and this 11th instalment is a downright rude follow-up to 2003's 'Super Final Edition'. The baseball-barmy Japanese devour the cute but deep gameplay of this plastic-bonced ball-whacker as fast as Konami can produce it, and owning the previous year's version is a social faux pas second only to blowing your nose in public.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"With mylar if mode just professional baseball player feeling!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 35 out of 40 (gold award)





6. THE CASTLE OF SHIKIGAMI II

Someone's clearly been taking the *Ikaruga* pills. And that's probably not their only medication: this manic vertico-blaster – originally a coin-op and Dreamcast title – is one of the few 'shmups' (think about it) to star *flying humans.* Humans who, in the words of one reviewer, "have feelings… have emotions… have a soul". Although that doesn't seem to prevent them ripping seven bells out of all kinds of orange blobs and big boss gits. Naturally, there's also a Special Edition version containing a small kitten.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Vision world fictitious spirit movement bullet keep exceeding…"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 34 out of 40 (gold award)





4. TENSAI BIT-KUN: GRAMON BATTLE

Sequel of sorts to bizarrely-titled PS2 game *Magic Pengel: The Quest for Color*, this *Pokémon Stadium*-style fighter lets you *draw* a monster (body parts, weapons, colours, everything), then send it scuttling into battle. Albeit a battle that sadly brings to mind three things: a rock, a paper and some scissors. Still, nice idea, and even if you're less artistically-minded than Stone Cold Steve Austin, you'll create angry little monsters that are better-looking than desperate Nintendo managed with Pokémon numbers 275 through 366.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"You thinking, which is drawn, becomes three-dimensional!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 30 out of 40 (silver award)

5. DREAMMIX TV: WORLD FIGHTERS

Hudson Soft, Konami and toy company Takara form a Triumvirate Of Profit-Making and bring all their 'properties' into one big *Super Smash Bros*-style rumble. So: Bomberman vs *Castlevania's* Simon Belmont. And: Optimus Prime vs Solid Snake. It certainly *sounds* cool enough to have you salivating like a St Bernard. But it's rubbish, in actual fact, with a slim number of moves and around 500 characters you've never heard of, including a small pink doll that was popular in 1960s Japan. Fighting against Megatron.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"The hot battle will be unfolded in the friend and simultaneous!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 27 out of 40



3. MUTSU TONOHOHON



Sweet virtual pet thingy that's hilariously translated as 'Mutsu Nonchalant' by Babelfish. Raise a tiny cutie in a dome half full of water, teach it words, scream for victory at the Mutsu Tonohohon mini-olympics, and sing until your heart bursts clean open with love. It's like Tamagotchi, but 40 quid better. Look out for a guest appearance by those Jelly Baby-lookalike Japanese toys that shake their heads when the sun shines. Anyone out there still with us?



BABELFISH SAYS: *"The world of the strange water quite the parallel world."*

FAMITSU SCORE: 23 out of 40

2. NARUTO 2



The sequel to the game responsible for the 'Megaton' rumour outrage, and a 3D fighter based on the TV series based on the anime comic-book based on the boy with a fox demon in his belly. All fireballs and combos and counters, *Naruto 2* just about manages to squeeze onto the cel-shading bandwagon by standing on the heads of its 750 other passengers – and has sold a gazillion import copies thanks to its uncomplicated combat system. Which must make the coders of the deep, strategic *Soul Calibur 2* just want to curl up and die.



BABELFISH SAYS: *"Co-operating with the red circle, the fang the fang!"*

FAMITSU SCORE: 31 out of 40 (silver award)

1. GIFTPIA



Simultaneously the biggest Japanese-only game here (having been published by The Big N themselves), the weirdest, the best and the one that looked most likely to crop up in sweet readable English – before Nintendo of America quietly cancelled it. Teeth gnash!

Admittedly, an RPG without levelling up, weapons or indeed any combat whatsoever sounds destined to give you the watery eyes of pure boredom. But *GiFTPiA* has been drinking liberally from the *Animal Crossing* gene pool, giving you tons of odd jobs and mini-missions to do while attempting to collect the five million notes the local mayor needs to rerun your Coming of Age Ceremony (you slept through the first one, see).

Seven-and-a-half minutes is about as long as most non-Japanese speakers last before bursting into bemused tears, on account of cloth yetis, mushrooms that turn your hair blonde, a man who turns into a chicken and minigames that involve bashing down a toilet door. But beneath all those weird squiggly Hiragana symbols is a sweet story-led quest, with lead man Pockle acting as matchmaker and wish-granter for the lovestruck locals. In short: the best Gamecube game you'll never 'get'.

BABELFISH SAYS: *"Aiming toward RPG which puts out individual personality on the front."*

FAMITSU SCORE: 34 out of 40 (gold award)



PROPHESYING THE NEWS OF TOMORROW WITH REAL-LIFE FUTUROLOGY

MADAME GREENER *Predicts...*

Looking into the future through crossed eyes...

THIS MONTH: DS DETAIL DELVE

Playable games one minute, new look the next: Nintendo just can't keep their traps shut about their new double-screen games slab. So what new details will be escaping from The Big N's PR pipe in the run-up to that 'end of the year' Japanese launch? It's clearly a case for a bagful of rocks.

1 We're pleased to introduce Perth, Dagaz and Uruz, our first three runes. They mean 'birth', 'day' and, er, 'an extinct brown cow' respectively. Perth is a "positive" predicto-rock according to our guide, and this bottom triangle of runes generally represents 'physical' stuff. Add all that together and we can think of one 'physical birthday' thing that would make DS smile – namely, PSP being absent from Japan's shop shelves thanks to an unexpected delay from Sony. You heard it here first! Just don't ask us about the cow.

2 From bottom to top, Uruz, Isa and Hagaluz here show the transition from past to present. Pulling out Isa and Hagaluz is the equivalent of falling down a manhole into a shaft caked in dog mash before having a piano dropped on your head. The message: things aren't that rosy for Nintendo right now.

3 Scratches chin reflectively! Ehwaz has landed in the 'immediate future' slot, and it's a rune with a very strong relationship with transport – "horse, car, plane, boat or other vehicle", it says here. We're sticking our necks out 'til our vertebrae snap clean off by saying: *Grand Theft Auto* announced on DS before November. Letter-pebbles, we salute you.

4 In the 'far future' position lies Gebo, the rune with an emphasis on relationships, exchanges and union. In other words, 'connecting'. Madame Greener reads this as suggesting that proper internet hook-up for DS multiplayer will be happening "about the same time that Justin Timberlake dumps Diaz and dances in through my bedroom window". Her words.

5 We get 'emotional' with this trio of runes - Dagaz (day, remember?), Hagaluz (hail, badness) and Nyd (delay). Shudder… sounds like we're in the shadowy realm of release date disappointment. It's probably too late to shift Nintendo DS's Japanese or US dates, so – hankies at the ready – it's likely it won't make that touted 'Q1 2005' European launch. Stupid rocks.

6 It doesn't take a genius to work out what this 'spiritual' triangle of runes represents. Gebo (relationship) + Nyd (patience, delay) + Dyr (war) = connection between consoles + long process + battle = techno war between Nintendo DS and PSP. Just let us know if we're going too fast for you.

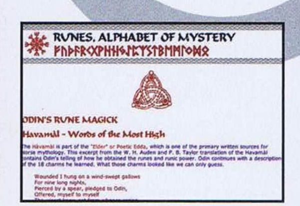


AND THE PREDICTIONS...

- Sony's PSP delayed: Nintendo DS to have shop shelves all to its smug little self. For a bit.
- DS to miss proposed 'Q1 2005' European launch due to 'worldwide demand'. Expect April/May.
- Rockstar to announce a version of *Grand Theft Auto* for DS? Ooh, we're tingling.
- Nintendo to suddenly go very, very quiet about all that wireless internet wi-fi multiplayer stuff.
- War of words between Sony and Nintendo to escalate, led by megaphone mouth of Reggie.

Madame Greener's mystical wisdom will be ripped to shreds in a future issue.

THE METHOD
CASTING RUNES


RUNES. ALPHABET OF MYSTERY

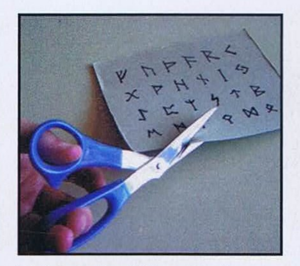
ODIN'S RUNE MAGICK

Havamal - Words of the Most High

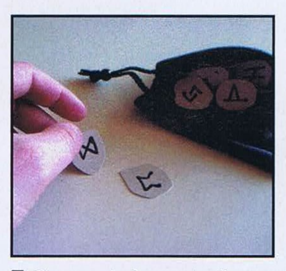
The Havamal is part of the "Elder" or Poetic Edda, which is one of the primary written sources for Norse mythology. This excerpt from the W. H. Auden and P. B. Taylor translation of the Havamal contains Odin's telling of how he obtained the runes and runic power. Odin continues with a description of the 18 charms he learned. What those charms looked like we can only guess.

Wounded I hung on a wind-swept gallows
For nine long nights,
Pierced by a spear, pledged to Odin,
Offered, myself to myself

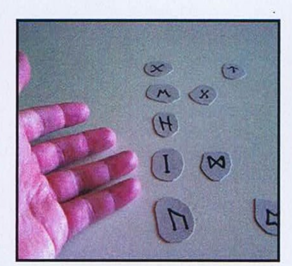
1. The 24 Futhark runic symbols were revealed to Norse god Odin when he hanged himself on a tree. No, it could happen.



2. Runes should be carved onto stone tablets. We did ours on the back of a cornflakes box and got an adult to cut them out.



3. One rune is drawn at a time and set on the table. Don't look at them yet or Odin gets mad and throws sparky lightning at you.



4. When nine runes have been drawn, clap hands and bellow, "Behold! The Futhark gazes where no man may!" (optional).

Correspondences with the Elder Futhark.

Runes		Represents	Correspondences		
Symbol	Name		Stone	Flower	Tree
Frey's Aett					
ᚠ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Lily of the Valley	Elder
ᚢ	Ur	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ᚦ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ᚨ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Ash
ᚱ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Oak
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			

5. Check runes against 'Rune FAQ v1.7', which we found on the website of L33tRuneD00d along with a Buffy fan fiction archive.

TOP 10: NEW ZELDA FACTS

Things you definitely didn't know about the E3 showstopper.



1 HOMIES

Nintendo's marketing team originally wanted the E3 video to feature Link riding a skateboard and yelling "Check it!" while high-fiving Epona. They claimed this would help Nintendo 'cyber-connect with the hood'.



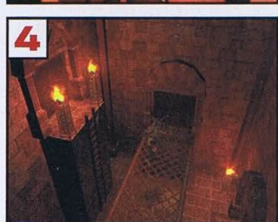
2 BRAVERY

Shigsy was only onstage for a few seconds after the unveiling, because callous Nintendo reps told him that his cardboard sword and shield were his sole defence against a mad gun-wielding stalker waiting for him somewhere in the crowd.



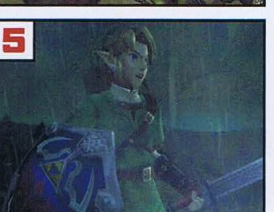
3 BAH!

Immediately following the game's unveiling, the top comments on Gamecube-related internet forums included "What are Nintendo playing at?", "Petition: Bring Back Cel-Shaded Nu Celda!!", "Reali-sick Hell-da Sux!", and "Tingle is my dad".



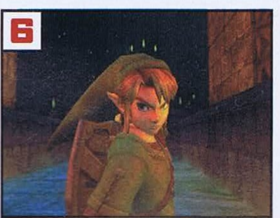
4 DARK SIDE

The game's storyline will delve into the motives of Ganondorf, and how he turned against Hyrule simply because, while visiting friends, he got tired of having to push a concrete block around and light two torches just to get into the toilet.



5 OW! OW! OW!

The man who yells 'Hungh-ah!' every time Link swings his sword insists on having his middle toe slammed inside a sandwich toaster until he emits the right sound. If this fails, audio technicians have to give him a chinese burn.



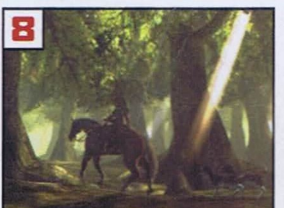
6 FLUDD

New items for Link include an edible shield, a Segway scooter, a talking sword, a BM-21 122mm Multiple Rocket Launcher, one of those giant horseshoe magnets like the ones you get in cartoons, an otter, and a stupid talking water-filled backpack.



7 PAPA

The orcs in the E3 video were modelled on Hiroshi Yamauchi, who is not only the correct size, posture and angry, but is also now mainly spending his time hanging around on shop escalators, waving a saucepan and wooden spoon. Plus, Yamauchi has horns.



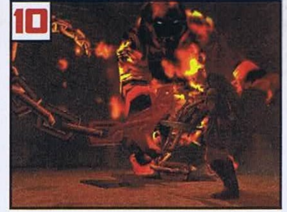
8 WOOF

After the music and masks, the 'hook' this time will be the two 'Dogs of Time' you see in the forest screenshot. Link is able to travel backwards and forwards in time by tickling their tummies and feeding them chocolatej mutt treats until they fall asleep.



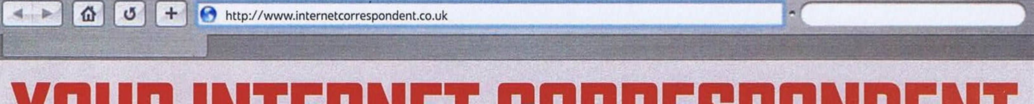
9 NUDITY

New Zelda will feature a multiplayer that requires GBAs and link-up cables, a rhythm-action minigame that uses the *Donkey Konga* bongos, 'naked Link' exclusively for DS owners, and an ending that you can only see if you write Nintendo a cheque for £1,500.



10 OH NO!

There'll be a bit where Link has to bat a boss's energy balls back with his sword – AGAIN.



YOUR INTERNET CORRESPONDENT

The best of the 'net several weeks after it happens.

• So you thought NGC/94's guitar guy - strumming the Mario theme plus sound effects - was good? Well, he wasn't playing a piano blindfolded, was he? That's exactly what someone who lives on the internet has done, bashing out a faithful version of the original Super Mario Bros. theme, on a piano, with two hands, blindfolded. Then ripping off the blindfold to play the Super Mario World music at crazy speeds. What's next - Metroid on harmonica while swimming with sharks? (Not an actual request).
> http://www.ebaumsworld.com/mariopiano.html

• Now that twin screens are back in fashion at Nintendo HQ, what better time to promenade along memory lane, courtesy of Aaron's Game & Watch Archive? Created, unsurprisingly, by a person named Aaron, it packs in a heap of history concerning Nintendo's trendy '70/'80s handhelds. Includes the soundtrack from a Japanese G&W commercial, with the lyrics, "The Game & Watch uses a micro computer / the Game & Watch internal clock is a digital quartz type".
> www9.ocn.ne.jp/~aaron/
>

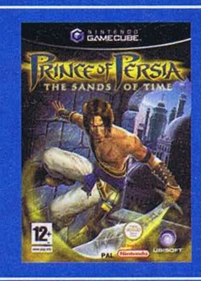
• In a conspicuous effort to be 'down' with the 'kids', manufacturers of tin-dwelling mints Altoids have 'homaged' machine-gun-fast Game Boy Advance smasher Wario Ware. Games include picking up an Altoid mint, getting a cat to lick an Altoid mint, typing the word 'MINT'... strangely, playing this game makes us feel like wrapping our tongue around a seriously strong mint! Or, more likely, sighing and heading off to play the real Wario Ware.
> www.altoids.com/index.aspx?area=game&relationID=407&siteGameID=315
>

• Just when you think the internet has exhausted all combinations of everything that could possibly happen, along comes a man who strips all four main Nintendo consoles down to their guts, then crams them all inside one giant wooden box to create the ultimate Nintendo console. Gamecube discs go in the top, N64 and SNES cartridges in the side, and NES carts front-load - it really has to be seen to be believed. And even then you won't believe it.
> www.the-elite.net/NEC/
>

//got a link?//
Got a Nintendo-related link for Your Internet Correspondent? Email it to ngcyic@hotmail.com

THE MAKING OF...

PRINCE OF PERSIA
THE SANDS OF TIME



ngc00.boxes.prince_pers.jpg


△ Skeletal mad-birds were ten-a-penny in 9th-century Persia. A penny went a long way back then…

FILED BY: MARK GREEN

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time began life tucked away in a March 2001 press release. Ubi Soft had just bought a division of fellow publisher The Learning Company, which came with the rights to "world-renowned brands like *Pool of Radiance*, *Prince of Persia*, *Chessmaster* and *Harpoon*". It sounded so simple: it was anything but. After untangling the legal spider's web, Ubi Soft discovered that they actually only had the rights to the *name*. The intellectual property rights – the permission to design and sell a *Prince of Persia* game – were still with Jordan Mechner, the man who'd created the two-million-selling PC original with a little help from his dad and brother back in the late '80s. Worse, Jordan was wary of letting his baby near a games console again, after the Prince had had his reputation dragged through the mud by a right royal mess of a 3D update in 1999. *Prince of Persia* looked set to remain a forgotten mention on a boring old press release.

The man who changed Jordan's mind was Yannis Mallat. In March, he invited Jordan to his office at Ubi Soft's Montreal offices, and showed him a video that he and an internal team of six coders had created. It showed a simple skeletal figure running up walls, rebounding off pillars and swinging around poles with remarkable fluidity – a fluidity that echoed the groundbreaking rotoscopic animation of the original *Prince*. Jordan, gobsmacked, agreed to join Yannis's team and help create a proper heir to the *Prince of Persia* throne.

"IT'S HARD TO FIND ANYONE WHO'S PLAYED SANDS OF TIME WHO DOESN'T LOVE IT"

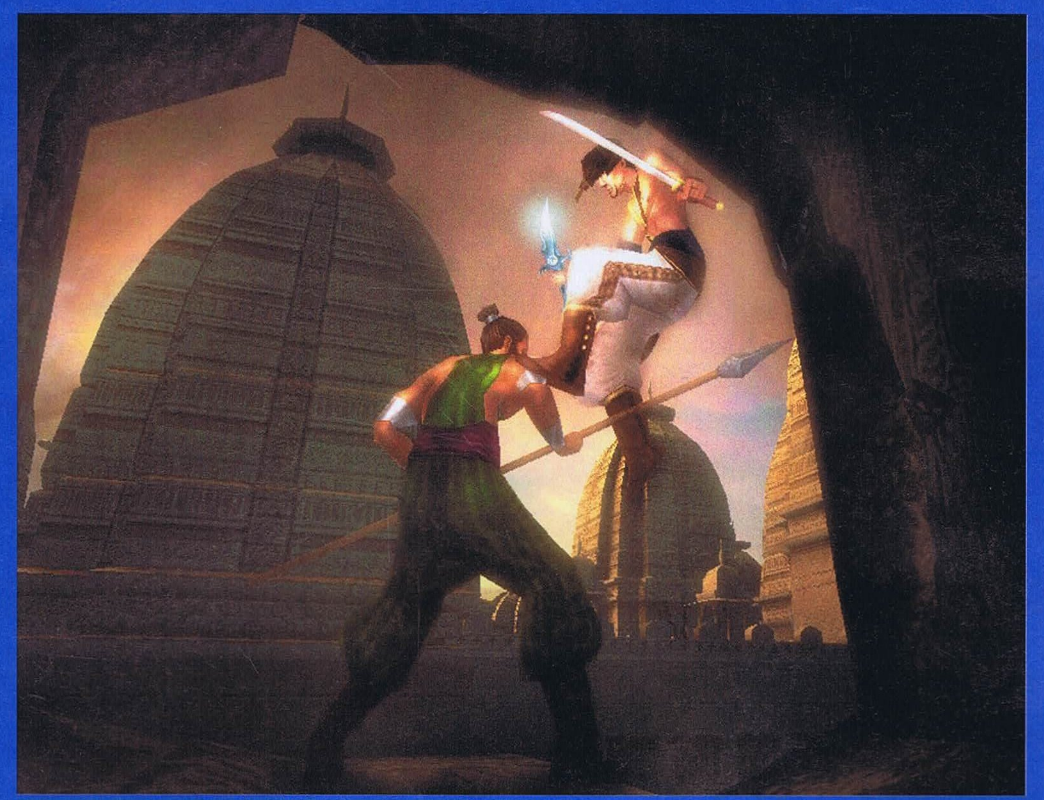
"We had the Godfather on board!" laughs Yannis, the cheerful 29-year-old French-Canadian charged with producing *The Sands of Time*. "Jordan told us the work we were doing was reawakening in him the joy of making videogames. We knew we were on a good track."

That 'good track' resulted in a modern classic. It's hard to find anyone who's played *The Sands of Time* who doesn't love it, thanks to a dreamlike Arabian Knights atmosphere conjured up by misty, cinematic visuals, a somersaulting package of acrobatic combat, the ability to rewind time to cheat death and the fluid movement of the Prince himself. He's made up of 700 different animations and the

BLIMEY!


When we spoke to the Prince of Persia *team they were one week away from recording the spoken dialogue for the sequel. "We want to avoid any comedy accents," one coder told us, referring to the guard in* Sands of Time *with a cockney accent to rival Dick Van Dyke.*

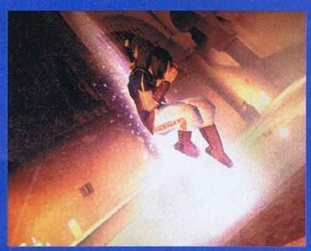
Publisher: Ubi Soft	Top GC chart position: 3
Developer: Ubi Soft Montreal	Reviewed: NGC/90, 91%
Release date: 20th Feb 04	



△ Hong Kong action star Jet Li influenced many of *Prince of Persia's* stunning, acrobatic combat moves.







△ *PoP's* 'flash-forwards' were neat.



ROYAL RUMBLE

Although combat in PoP tipped our repetitive-o-meter into the red zone, it was a visual feast. There's nothing like watching the Prince run up an enemy to leap over their head and dagger them in the spine.









controls make it feel like he's wired into your brain.

It's an astonishing achievement, given that before *The Sands of Time*, the 80-strong team that Yannis gathered around him were best known for *Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers*. And bizarre when you learn that the brilliant time-rewinding feature burst into life right at the start of development, with pretty much everything else – the story, the slo-mo Matrix-like moments, the Dagger of Time, the whole 'Sands of Time' concept – being invented or tweaked purely to justify its existence.

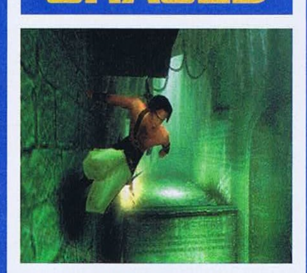
"I wanted a technology breakthrough," says Yannis. "The original *Prince of Persia* had that amazing rotoscopic animation, and I wanted something similar that would make people go 'wow'. I brainstormed with the designers early on, and we hit on the idea of being able to rewind time after you died. Our senior programmer Claude Langlais heard this, and of course programmers love a challenge – they want *meat*. So he told us he'd love to try to get this feature working. Next thing we know, he's got it up and running in the first prototype! So that was our breakthrough, and then the whole game had to be built around it. The plot, the Dagger of Time, the slow-motion… it all came from there."

"FEATURES WERE THROWN IN THE BIN ALMOST AS FAST AS THEY WERE WRITTEN DOWN"

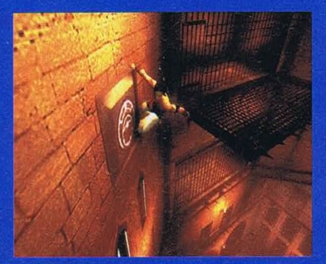
Of the two years that *Prince of Persia* spent in development, Yannis insisted on dedicating 15 months to pre-production, ensuring that Ubi Soft were able to pin down a precise feel for the game before cracking on with final code. Features were thrown in the bin almost as fast as they were written down – ladders, horse-riding, desert fights, magic carpets and a fixed camera were all abandoned in favour of giving *Prince of Persia* a focus on impressive acrobatics, intense combat and a gameworld where the bedrooms, libraries and courtyards didn't contain puzzles – they *were* the puzzles.

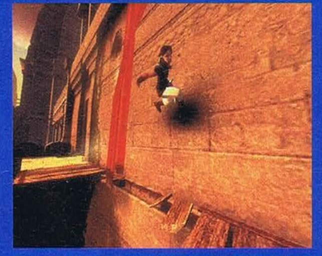
"Playing *Prince of Persia* feels like butter," says Yannis. "We achieved that by sitting our best animator and our best programmer next to each other, enabling them to work together, think together, and essentially create the Prince's movement and controls as though it was all coming from a single brain. They developed a tremendous number of transitional animations, too

CHASED



Back in 2001, a frantic chase through a crowded marketplace was planned for Sands of Time, with the Prince bouncing off buildings as he went. It was a huge area of "pure gameplay", according to Yannis, but was kicked out early to ensure final deadlines were met.



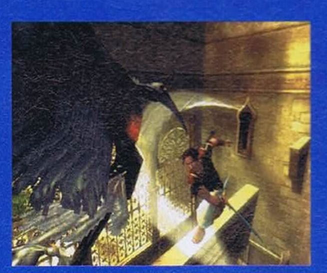




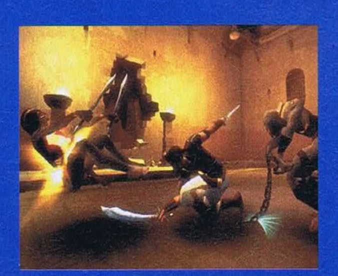
△ Ubi Soft Montreal made running on walls *feel* right. And that's a whole lot trickier to do than you'd realise.



△ The prince has another narrow escape from certain doom: bless those intuitive controls.

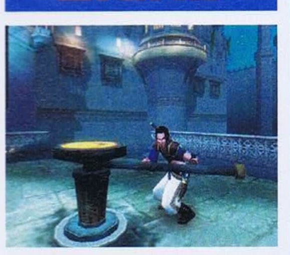


△ Birds in videogames must die.



△ Fact: Yannis promises in-combat dialogue for *Prince of Persia 2*.

GRIND



Yannis's favourite puzzle is the remarkable room-sized rotating platform, which clanks and grinds to pick up the keys that activate the palace's defences. "Because it's not just a puzzle that opens a door," says Yannis. "It justifies all the tricks and traps the player meets from then on."

– tiny movements that are too quick and short to be seen by your eye, but which link the Prince's moves to create that smooth fluidity."

The Prince's acrobatics are based on the wire-assisted craziness found in martial arts flicks like Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon. "Everyone knows that it's not possible to run ten metres along a vertical wall," says Yannis. "But in Crouching Tiger it's done in a way that makes you *feel* like it's plausible. That's what we wanted to recreate – players not laughing at someone running up a stone pillar, but just enjoying it."

That magical look of *The Sands of Time* emerged from a development disaster just prior to the game's first public outing at E3 2003. "Our goal was to navigate between a cartoony Aladdin world and a hyper-realistic look," says Yannis. "We were doing pretty well – but just before E3, we realised that our 3D engine wasn't powerful enough to generate the visuals we wanted. I didn't want to hear that."

"BEFORE E3, WE REALISED THAT OUR 3D ENGINE WASN'T POWERFUL ENOUGH"

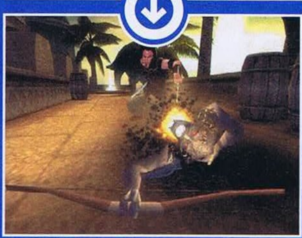
Thanks to the hard work of Ubi Soft coders, another engine developed by Ubi Soft Shanghai was 'plugged into' the game. But this altered *Sands of Time's* visuals slightly, so a graphical filter was used in an attempt to recreate the original look. Tweaking it, they stumbled on a graphical style that blurred the edges of objects and

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS



How to bring a 9th-century Prince back to life, with minimum mess.



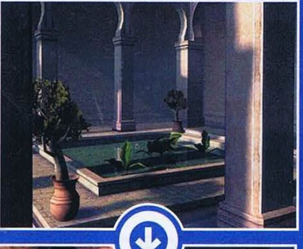


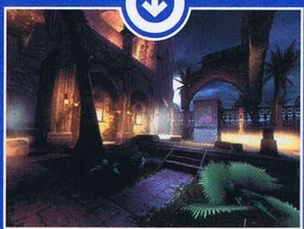
1. The fourth and final sword of the game is the one Yannis loves watching players get to grips with. "When you slash enemies with that, and they vanish into sand immediately, you get a huge feeling of power."



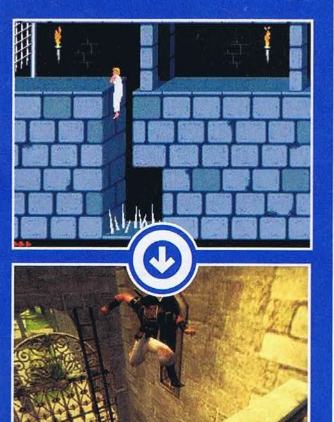


2. The Persian Prince began as a young turbaned boy, before morphing into the beefy hero soldier man you see in the final game. In fact, he doesn't look unlike Raphael Lacoste, the Ubi Soft Art Director who created him.

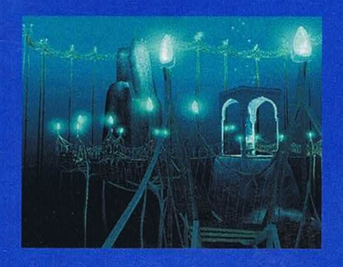


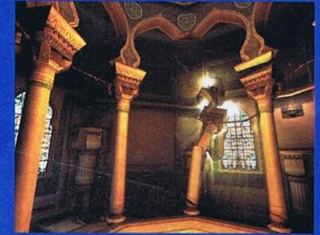


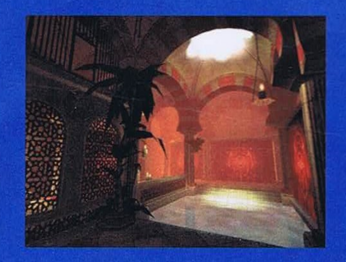
3. Ubi Soft Montreal aimed to have a real "graphical identity" for *PoP*. Colours were tinted and 'burned' – the same effects used in movies like Lord of the Rings – to achieve that hypnotic Arabian Nights look.



4. Yannis wanted to have the "best-controlled, best-animated character ever" for *The Sands of Time*, in homage to the original Prince – who was digitized from hours of camcorder footage of Jordan Mechner's brother.









washed out the colours, lending everything the beautiful 'fairytale' look that you see in the final game.

After a successful E3 – the prince was crowned Best Action/ Adventure Game at the E3 Game Critics Awards – the team came under intense pressure from 'the suits' to finish *Prince of Persia* for US release at the tail end of 2003. It was a monumental effort: a Griffin boss that originally made three big appearances was rudely shown the door ("He's back in *Prince of Persia 2*", reveals Yannis), and over 13,000 bugs in the game code had to be squashed in three months. With the deadline just days away, *Prince of Persia's* producers were muttering about delaying the launch.

But they made it. Yannis wasn't too happy with the combat – "it wasn't as deeply thought out as the rest of the game," he believes – but otherwise, *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* was a glittering jewel, scoring 91% from us and going on to win an unprecedented seven gongs at the 2004 Interactive Achievement Awards, including Computer Action/Adventure Game of the Year and Outstanding Achievement in Game Design.

"My favourite bit is at the end when the Prince loses the Dagger of Time," says Yannis. "For the first 12 hours of the game, you have the Dagger, and you're happy. You can defeat enemies, rewind time, and so on. Then the Prince gives it away – and *everyone* who plays it then starts tiptoeing around enemies and running away, aware they've lost their power. It's a real thrill for us to see people doing exactly what we hoped for! Then the Prince finds the final sword and realises that he doesn't *need* the dagger. We made you feel weak, then we made you feel strong. The way we manipulate your emotions is a huge part of our game-making philosophy."

After having his arm twisted by Yannis, it's unlikely Jordan Mechner will be working on another *Prince of Persia* – he's working on a new project. But he's happy for Ubi Soft Montreal to continue building the *PoP* legend, and Yannis is slaving away on *PoP2* right now.

Emotions are the real battlefield, says Yannis. "Hollywood is great at giving you butterflies in your belly and a beating heart. But there is something we have that Hollywood doesn't have: interactivity. Videogames are a fantastic medium to play with."

"THE PRINCE FINDS THE FINAL SWORD AND REALISES THAT HE DOESN'T NEED THE DAGGER"

ENDGAME



Yannis and a dozen programmers held a scotch whisky tasting session to celebrate Prince of Persia's *completion. Each brought a bottle of whisky, and performed a thoroughly scientific test as to which was best. (Okay, they drank it.) "Mine actually won!" Yannis just about manages to recall.*



WARP ZONE

Quick! Nip back to see magazine bits you might have missed…

Christmas 1997: Snow on the mag logo, a monkey on the cover and monsters in our pockets…

Not long to go now. There are only 109 shopping days 'til Christmas, you know. What better way to get us all in the festive spirit than a look back at Christmas past? Seven years past, at that, when *Lylat Wars* was topping the charts. The cover of issue 10 featured *<spit>* Diddy Kong – the Scrappy Doo to Donkey's Scooby – wearing a Santa hat, driving a kart, pointing to the sky and saying, in all probability, "Punch me. Punch me in the face. Hard. I like it."

Looking back, though, the thing that still entertains us is the magazine's 'How to… Get your head around Pocket Monsters' feature. This is where it all began – back on the Game Boy with *'Pockemon' Red* and *Green*. We learned how Pocket Monsters were categorised in two ways (by 'kind' and by 'type') how you really needed to be super-fluent in Japanese to bother importing it and how the Pikachu Pocket Monsters song was turning the airwaves yellow. Hope it helped get your head 'round it all.

FIVE STAR!

Nintendo's three-day annual expo in Tokyo – Space World – was due to open as the issue went to press. Undeterred, the team offered their predictions. Andrea was hopeful for *Mario Kart 64 2*. She crazy lady! "It'll have Magikoopa and Koopa Trooper in it, and correct all the flaws of the first game." Tim was looking forward to tucking into his hat if a playable version of *F-Zero X* wasn't on display. Jonathan's money was on a 64DD-related shock, while Zy expected a first glimpse of *Super Mario 64 2*.

"SAPPORO"
Max 'Maximum' Everingham was the magazine's Tokyo correspondent. He could often be found having a Pokémon deathmatch over a strong coffee in a café in Sapporo – all in the name of work. Brilliant. He now works at Codemasters.

"DAFT"
"The little monsters benefit from a licensing drive which makes the Power Ranges marketing look totally daft." That was written in 1997. It could have been written in '98, '99, '00, '01…

THE HORROR BEGINS
According to Japanese monthly, The 64 Dream, the top five most popular Pocket Monsters were:

1. **Pikachu (1089 pts)**
2. **Myu (423 pts)**
3. **Lizadon (132 pts)**
4. **Myutsu (125 pts)**
5. **Zenigame (113 pts)**

Damn that stinking yellow electric rat…

"NUCLEAR"
Being the first mag to play *Diddy Kong Racing*, the racer that rolled 'silently out of Rare's secret Twycross silo like a giant fun fur nuclear missile' was a good thing. The game was awarded 90%, but it couldn't topple *Mazza Kart*.

"LEFT-HANDED"
The issue carried a giant guide to 'the biggest game of 1998!' *Ocarina of Time*, natch. Helpfully, the mag pointed out that Link's left-handed. Is he?



LEGEND OF THE OVERTON

Aw, look at the cuddly chump. Being Christmas (or more likely October when the issue was sent to the printers…) the team decided to give each other presents. "Wil's tiles had been getting so worn through excessive use that he couldn't read the symbols. A top-of-the-range mah jong set cheered him up greatly." Mah jong. Grumpy old men just can't get enough of it.



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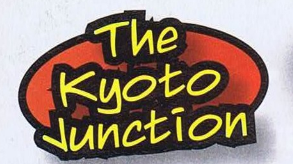
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The Junction Guardian



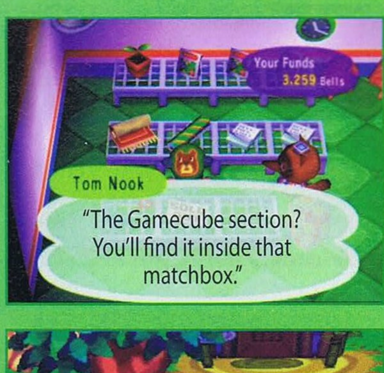
Volume 98 | Wednesday, October 99th 2004 | Price 2 Bells

Serving Kyoto Junction and beyond.

Experience the Nintendo way of life - 24:7

Take a train to Kyoto forest and live life the Nintendo way, at a pace that suits you – as long as it's teeth-clenchingly, hair-rippingly slow! In *Kyoto Junction*, you can meet and chat with hilarious Nintendo residents who neither know nor care what you think, shop at Tom Nook's in vain for games without a ten-month exclusivity contract with rival manufacturers, dig frantically in the ground for cash to prop the company up between handheld console releases or just go fishing and hope for the best. Hear the locals trot out the same vacuous marketing-approved comments as last year; learn songs like "Release Date Blues" and "She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain In Q1-Q2 2005" from the banjo-plucking O. K. Shigsy and hook your Nintendo Gamecube up to your Game Boy Advance and experience a world of wondering why you bothered. *Kyoto Junction* will be out in the US and Japan next year, and is due for release in Europe roughly one month before the universe implodes.



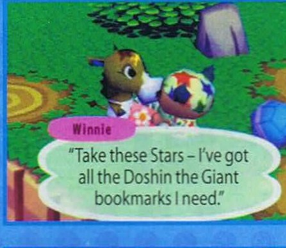






There are so many friends for you to meet in Kyoto Junction, and they're happy to chat to you in upsettingly meaningless PR talk 24:7!







VISIT THE DUMP!

Old items (that not even a man living in a bin would want) can be picked up for free at the town dump!



Watch out for Mr Regetti!

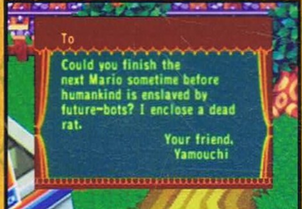
Remember to save your game, or you'll arouse the wrath of Kyoto Junction's angriest resident!

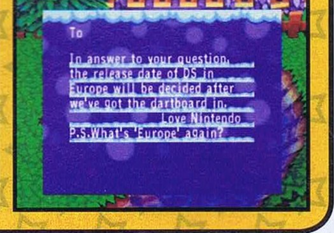




Waste ink writing to Kyoto Junction residents – and read what they're writing to each other!







Enjoy many events!

There's always something happening in Kyoto Junction – usually postponed at least three times or announced at a games show then quietly 'disappeared'.

- Yamauchi-ing Sunday
- Funfair: with 'Pin the Release Date on the Calendar'.
- Stars Catalogue update (twice a year)
- Broadband Adaptor Memorial Day
- Annual financial results conference (Q2)



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SOME GIRLS - rachel stevens	114213	THESE WORDS ARE MY OWN - n. bedingfield	114346	IS IT COS I'M COOL - mousse t	114374
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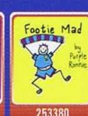
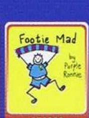
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